Hafa Adai!

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IPI hires company to dismantle 2 cranes. PAGE 3

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# DPL denies Honest Profit's request for lease extension

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

## » DPL tags compliance issues that appear to be unresolved

Noting that the Department of Public Lands has identified several compliance issues in Honest Profit International Ltd.'s hotel project in San Antonio that appear unresolved, DPL Secretary Teresita A. Santos has denied the company's request to extend its land lease for an additional 15 years.

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FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Construction of the main buildings of Honest Profit International Ltd.'s 312-room hotel project in San Antonio remains incomplete in this photo taken recently.

# Senate holds off fast action on $15M MPLT line of credit

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

DeLeon Guerrero

The Senate did not act Friday on a bill that authorizes the CNMI government to negotiate a revolving line of credit with the Marianas Public Land Trust in the amount of $15 million, citing a need to conduct due diligence first.

Senate President Edith E. DeLeon Guerrero (D-Saipan), however, continued for today, Monday, at 1pm, the special session in which senators are going to decide whether to approve or not the legislation, House Bill 23-77.

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FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Commonwealth Casino Commission board chair Edward C. DeLeon Guerrero, left, talks with Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC manager/director Howyo Chi during a break in the CCC board's monthly meeting at the Springs Plaza Building in Gualo Rai last Thursday morning.

# DPW breaks ground for Naftan Road Improvement Project

As part of the Palacios-Apatang administration's efforts to prioritize infrastructure projects, the CNMI Department of Public Works broke ground last Oct. 27 for the Route 302 and 304 Naftan Road Improvement Project.

The $7.2-million project, which is funded by the U.S. Department of Transportation

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OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Gov. Arnold I. Palacios gives his remarks during the official groundbreaking of the Route 302 and 304 Naftan Road Improvement Project last Friday, Oct. 27, 2023. The project, which is funded by the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration, involves improvement of the existing coral road to include a two-lane paved road with a shoulder/bike lane, drainage system, pavement markings, and traffic signs.

# '2024 to 2032 reasonable time for IPI to pay $62M casino license fees'

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Commonwealth Casino Commission board chair Edward C. DeLeon Guerrero proposed that the period from Aug. 12, 2024, to Aug. 12, 2032, is a "reasonable" period of time for Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC to pay the CNMI government its outstanding annual casino license fees, now amounting to $62 million.

The annual casino license fee is $15.5 million each year

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Atkins Kroll announces the appointment of Clark Boswell as vice president and general manager for Atkins Kroll Saipan effective Oct.16, 2023.
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Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told the nation Saturday night that the military has opened a "second stage" in the war against Hamas.
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"Friends" star Matthew Perry, the Emmy-nominated actor whose sarcastic, but lovable Chandler Bing was among television's most famous and most quotable characters, has died at 54.
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# Local

## Saipan Mayor's Office sued for nonpayment

By CHRYSTAL MARINO
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CORRESPONDENT

With the Office of the Mayor of Saipan being sued to compel it to pay Construction and Material Supply Inc. for quarry materials, Mayor Ramon Blas "RB" Camacho is actually relieved, saying this will finally settle the issue of what constitutes a "community benefit," as outlined in the permits granted quarrying firms.

Speaking to reporters last Wednesday at the Sugar King Park, Camacho said the lawsuit is actually a "good case."

"This is a good case…for the…CNMI as a whole. … Where do we stand on this public benefit [issue]," said Camacho. "I have nothing against the quarry, okay? I have nothing against the people at the quarry. They are doing their job but, as a mayor servicing the people, especially in repairing the roads, that is my concern."

Camacho told the media "I'm very serious on this issue and I think this is a very good case you know I just hope for a good ruling in favor of the Municipality of Saipan but again I just want to make the record straight I have nothing against the quarry operators."

CMS is suing the Office of the Mayor and Camacho to collect on $36,126.25 that it said represents unpaid material that exceed the community benefit agreement.

CMS, a quarry operator at the Kannat Tabla quarry, is asking the Superior Court to compel Camacho and the municipality of Saipan to pay $36,126.25, along with the legal costs associated with the lawsuit.

CMS explained in their lawsuit that the amount had reached this sum after Camacho and the Saipan Mayor's Office not only received base course material that exceeded the 100 cubic yard approved by the Department of Public Lands under the public benefit requirement of its permit, but the mayor's office also ordered 7.5 cubic yards of aggregates—parts of which constituted processed material. These aggregates, CMS said, are not included in the public benefit agreement, and all agencies must pay for this material.

Camacho

The CMS lawsuit was filed on Oct. 18, 2023, by CMS and their lawyer, Robert Torres.

The lawsuit states: "For the period of Feb. 1, 2023, through Sept. 11, 2023, CMS issued and provided the Saipan municipality with a monthly statement of its invoice for the quarry materials supplied to the Saipan municipality." It went on to say that "despite monthly notices of its invoices, the Saipan municipality failed to pay and continues to fail or refuses to pay CMS..."

CMS accuses the Saipan Mayor's Office of breach of contract,and unjust enrichment.

"Mayor RB and the Saipan municipality have breached the contract by failing and refusing to pay the amount of $36,126.25, which is equivalent to the value of the quarry materials and for services performed by delivery of these materials to the Saipan municipality's project sites. CMS has been damaged by Mayor RB and the Saipan municipality's breach to the extent of at least $36,126.25 as of Sept.11, 2023. CMS has been required to hire an attorney to bring this action for damages and is entitled to recover reasonable attorney's fees and costs incurred in doing so."

It said that Camacho and the Saipan Mayor's Office knew or were aware that CMS was delivering and supplying it with quarry materials that exceeded 100 cubic yards of raw or coral materials.

## Stiff prison term faces man in meth smuggling scheme

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
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REPORTER

A man who recently pleaded guilty to attempting to smuggle over $1.8 million worth of methamphetamine into the CNMI through the U.S. Postal Service faces a possible maximum sentence of 20 years.

Yang Liang recently pleaded guilty to the smuggling attempt and, as part of a plea deal, he is facing a possible maximum sentence of 20 years.

Yang pleaded guilty last week to one count of conspiracy to possess methamphetamine with the intent to distribute before U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona. He remains in U.S Marshals Service custody while he awaits his sentencing, which the court has set for January 2024.

According to the complaint against Yang, Customs officer Shota Castro found the drugs during a routine inspection of mail at the Chalan Kanoa post office last Sept. 23, 2023. The drugs were concealed inside four boxes containing silver lava lamps and one of them appeared to have been tampered with and there was a dry crystal-like substance on the lamp.

Castro then conducted a field test of the substance, which yielded a positive result for methamphetamine.

Yang was arrested soon after he claimed the parcel. Later, speaking through an interpreter, he told investigators he was expecting a bow and arrow from his friend in Guam.

Yang told officers that he was tricked into receiving the parcels, not knowing they contained drugs. However, investigators noted they had not informed Yang that methamphetamine was discovered inside either package.

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FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Tower crane No. 5, left, and tower crane No. 6, atop Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC's unfinished Imperial Palace Resort/Casino project in Garapan are expected to be soon removed after IPI hired Ocean B LLC to dismantle the cranes which are found by the Department of Public Works to pose imminent threat to public safety and properties.

# IPI hires company to dismantle 2 cranes

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC has hired a company that will dismantle the two cranes atop IPI's unfinished Imperial Palace Resort/Casino project in Garapan, according to IPI's newly appointed manager/director, Howyo Chi.

In response to Commonwealth Casino Commission board vice chair Rafael S. Demapan's questions about IPI's cranes during the board's meeting last Thursday, Chi disclosed that they recently submitted a letter to Department of Public Works Secretary Ray N. Yumul to inform that they have entered into an agreement with a construction company to remove the cranes.

Chi said the company, Ocean B LLC, will dismantle crane tower Nos. 5 and 6 at no cost for DPW or the CNMI government.

He said the cost to remove the cranes is $150,000.

Che said Ocean B LLC is negotiating with DPW on the scope of work required in order for the cranes to be taken down.

"IPI will be responsible to pay. We're not asking the government to pay anything [for] the crane removals," Chi said.

Last Oct. 5, DPW Building Safety official Yvonne B. Tenorio issued a notice of actual and immediate danger to IPI, declaring crane No. 5 shall be deconstructed/or disassembled as it poses an imminent threat to public safety and properties.

Yumul recently stated that DPW will take down crane No. 5 and will hire a contractor via emergency procurement to do the disassembly.

Tower crane No. 5, which looms over Hibiscus Street between the IPI casino/resort building and Joeten Hafa Adai, has reportedly not been used since December 2020.

Tower crane No. 6 is the one facing the beach.

# $232.5K to help low-income families pay their CUC bills

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Low-income families in the Marianas can get help with their Commonwealth Utilities Corp. bills using $232,505 in grants awarded to the CNMI on Tuesday, according to Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (D-MP) over the weekend.

Sablan disclosed in his *e-kilili* newsletter that the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has announced the release of Low-Income Home Energy Assistant Program funds, which includes the annual block grant and additional money from President Joe Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, or U.S. Public Law 117-56.

The delegate cited the LIHEAP funding is an opportunity to improve funding for the CNMI early in his congressional career. In 2013, he said, they were able to increase the LIHEAP funding for the Commonwealth and other insular areas by 400%.

LIHEAP money helps pay monthly CUC bills and assists families with weatherization and other home repairs that save energy costs. In recent years, families received up to $58 in monthly assistance from the program. Over 400 households in the CNMI typically benefit from LIHEAP.

"We are not alone in the pain of high energy costs," said Sablan, adding that some 25 million U.S. households face the impossibly difficult choice between food and medicines or paying for energy.

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# GMS bags top places in junior thespian competition

The administration and stakeholders of Green Meadow School are extremely proud of the 10 middle school students who bagged top places at the recent Junior International Thespian Society competition held last Oct. 7, 2023 at Mt. Carmel School.

In the monologue event, Rochelle Stephanie Anne De Leon (8th grade) won first place followed by Jamie Andrea Palabay (6th grade) in second place. Both of their performances were ranked superior by the judges.

On the other hand, the duet acting teams of GMS bagged the following places—Nelisa Nicole Acaba (8th grade) and Isabella Marie Mallari (8th grade), first place with superior rank; Rihanna Grace De Leon (8th grade) and Andrea Fhe Remilloza (8th grade), third place with excellent rank; Miel Jewel Mabaquiao (6th grade) and Nicole Tangonan (6th grade), fourth place with excellent rank; and Czainah Chutin (6th grade) and Savan Rithwong (7th grade), fifth place with excellent rank.

Students of Green Meadow School are encouraged to excel not only in academics but also in extra-curricular activities. ***(PR)***

GMS

The 10 Green Meadow School students who bagged top places at the recent Junior International Thespian Society competition pose with GMS administrators Milagros Songcuan, right, and Glenn Samuel Songcuan.

## DPL

*From page 1*

In her Wednesday letter to HPIL president Chaokai Huang, Santos said that extending HPIL's lease terms cannot be approved at this time pursuant to the Commonwealth Code because HPIL's leased premises does not currently have an existing hotel.

Santos added that because the lease is not set to expire until July 2039, any extension pursuant to the Commonwealth Code and NMI Administrative Code is premature.

"DPW would be happy to revisit HPIL's request for an extension once HPIL has resolved all outstanding compliance issues and has either completed construction of the hotel or is nearing expiration of the lease," Santos said.

The Hong Kong-based HPIL announced last Oct. 17 its partnership with multinational company, Marriott International, during a hotel management agreement signing ceremony at the Hyatt Regency Saipan.

A hotel management agreement means HPIL still owns the property in San Antonio, but it will be managed by Marriott International.

Construction on HPIL's $130-million, 312-room hotel project slowed down in 2019 for lack of foreign workers. Super Typhoon Soudelor and Yutu in 2015 and 2018, respectively, reportedly damaged the hotel complex project.

Last July 22, Huang sent a letter dated July 9, 2014, to DPL, requesting an extension of the lease agreement for an additional 15 years.

Santos said Huang states that the extension is necessary for HPIL to enter a hotel management agreement with a global brand hotel, as the hotel requires management of a long-term lease for a minimum of 20 years.

She said Article 4 of the lease grants the lessee an option to extend the lease for one additional term of 15 years, subject to the approval of the CNMI Legislature.

In citing compliance issues that appear to be unresolved, the secretary said HPIL also asked for a 15-year extension on its lease in January 2016, saying that its investor group had expressed several concerns regarding further investing in the CNMI and that the availability of funding was dependent on HPIL obtaining a 15-year lease extension.

**A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com**

## SENATE

*From page 1*

DeLeon Guerrero said they just received from MPLT that morning a copy of Gov. Arnold I. Palacios' letter to the agency and that it is important that the Senate be given the opportunity to review the information in the letter to make sure that they also do their due diligence in the interest of the public since they are getting into whether or not they'll approve a $15-million revolving credit line facility with MPLT.

The letter the Senate president was referring to is an Aug. 14, 2023, letter to MPLT board of trustee chairman Phillip Mendiola-Long coming from Palacios and Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang.

In their letter, Palacios and Apatang said the revolving line of credit will facilitate the construction progress of federally funded capital improvement and broadband infrastructure projects.

Movement on these projects will also facilitate revenue generation from construction activities, thus supporting revenue generation and tax collection, they said.

At the special session, Sen. Celina R. Babauta (D-Saipan) offered some amendments to change and delete specific languages in the proposed legislation.

Sen. Jude U. Hofschneider (R-Tinian) said they understand that the intent of the legislation is to move forward with approved U.S. Economic Development Administration projects. He cited that Palacios' letter dated July 17, 2023, asked MPLT for a $20-million revolving line of credit for reimbursable federally funded grants for Capital Improvement Projects administered by the EDA.

Hofschneider said that, in a separate July 21, 2023, letter from Mendiola-Long, he asked for, among other things, details such as current outstanding/ongoing projects and their progress; priority project listing and cost estimates; and letter from EDA certifying that the CNMI is in compliance with EDA grant terms.

"So I am just curious…can we just get a guidance…if there is any response to that request by chairman Long with regards to the listing of projects," the senator said.

DeLeon Guerrero said Palacios wrote the July 17 letter to MPLT after their June 20, 2023, meeting they had with MPLT. DeLeon Guerrero said she participated in that meeting, together with Palacios, House of Representatives Speaker Edmund S. Villagomez (Ind-Saipan), and House legal counsel Joseph Taijeron.

**A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com**

## DPW

*From page 1*

Federal Highway Administration, involves improvement of the existing coral road to include a two-lane paved road with a shoulder/bike lane, drainage system, pavement markings and traffic signs.

The project is a 2.5-mile long loop road in the southernmost part of the island, and traverses along the Francisco C.Ada-Saipan International Airport runway intersecting Route 304. The road improvement project will also give enhanced access to Obyan and Ladder beaches and other historic and scenic sites for the community and the island's visitors.

Gov. Arnold I. Palacios said that the groundbreaking is "a symbol of our unwavering commitment to the completion of more infrastructure projects that will benefit our community, better connect our residents, and contribute to our economic growth."

Palacios also said it is "it's essential to remember that every great accomplishment comes with its challenges. The construction phase may bring temporary inconveniences, but it's important to keep our eyes on the long-term benefits that will follow. Let's embrace this road construction project with patience and resilience, knowing that the end result will be worth it."

Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang said that this road improvement was the first project he pursued when he was part of the 10th Legislature as a lawmaker, and that to see it come to fruition is a dream come true.

DPW Secretary Ray Yumul gives his utmost gratitude to USDOT for their support of many of the much-needed infrastructure projects in the Commonwealth.

"We are extremely grateful for the support of the Federal Highway Administration, and we are looking forward to the completion of this Route, as well as the many other road enhancement projects that are ongoing on our islands," Yumul said.

"This project will not just make Route 302 and 304 safer, but give our island residents and visitors enhanced access to Obyan and Ladder Beach." ***(PR)***

## 2024

*From page 1*

from 2020 to 2023. The annual casino regulatory fee is $3.1 million, or a total of $12.6 million from October 2020 to October 2023.

DeLeon Guerrero presented his position during the CCC board's meeting last Thursday, for the CCC board's consideration regarding what constitutes a "reasonable" period of time.

The CNMI Supreme Court's Aug. 25, 2023, decision in CCC's case against IPI asks the commission to establish a reasonable period of time for IPI to pay the 2020, 2021, and 2022 annual license fees.

DeLeon Guerrero said the payments are in equal installments of an additional $5.1 million each year such that those fees are in paid in full by Aug. 1, 2032.

He said this payment would be in addition to payment of the outstanding 2020, 2021, and 2022 casino regulatory fees.

Finally, the chairman said, this is in addition to the 2023 annual license fee and 2023 casino regulatory fee that accrued after the end of the COVID-19 force majeure event as recognized by IPI's counsel and therefore remain due and payable at this time.

He noted that while IPI makes much of its inability to raise funds to pay the outstanding obligation while its casino license is suspended, payment of its outstanding obligation in full is not required to lift the suspension order.

DeLeon Guerrero said that, while he has attempted unsuccessfully to negotiate a global settlement with IPI on various terms, reaching a settlement is not necessary for lifting the suspension.

Rather, he said, the suspension order by its terms as upheld by the CNMI Supreme Court, conditions lifting the suspension on payment of the 2020 casino regulatory fee, payment of penalties, and compliance with the terms of CCC order 2020-003 (requiring a payroll reserve) and of CCC order 2020-004.

CCC order 2020-003 required IPI to have a payroll reserve, while CCC order 2020-004 required IPI to pay court-ordered judgments and other aged debts and certification that IPI has the ability to fully construct the initial gaming facility.

DeLeon Guerrero said IPI's satisfaction of those obligations as upheld by the CNMI Supreme Court is a necessary step for it to resume gaming activity and to avoid further revocation proceeding based on its continued non-compliance with those obligations.

He noted that the CNMI Supreme Court's ruling recognized the applicability of a force majeure defense of IPI's obligation to pay its annual license fees.

The high court found that IPI met its burden to establish by a preponderance of the evidence that COVID-19 was the proximate cause for its nonpayment of the annual license fee.

The high court ruled that the force majeure provision in the casino license agreement protects IPI from default in the event of force majeure, but this protection does not have the effect of excusing IPI's payment obligations.

The Supreme Court said IPI's obligation to make the annual license fee payment each year accrues every year IPI continues as the exclusive licensee.

DeLeon Guerrero said the high court then concluded that the annual license fees for 2020 and the following years have accrued and continue to accrue, and CCC must now decide on a reasonable deadline for IPI to pay them.

Because the 2023 annual license fee accrued after the end of the force majeure event, it was due on Aug. 12, 2023, he added.

Therefore there is no need for the CCC to determine a reasonable deadline for IPI to pay the 2023 annual license fee amount, he said.

With respect to the casino regulatory fee, DeLeon Guerrero said, there is no need for the commission to determine a reasonable deadline to pay the 2020 casino regulatory fee amount as force majeure does not excuse IPI's failure to pay it at that time.

Regarding penalties imposed by the CCC, DeLeon Guerrero said the high court's decision upholding $5 million in penalties means those penalties were due as required by CCC order No. 2021-002, therefore there is no need for the CCC to determine a reasonable deadline for IPI to pay the penalty amount.

# *Devil's Playground* to hit the stage on Oct 31

By CHRYSTAL MARINO
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CORRESPONDENT

Touching on hard topics such as trauma, mental illness, domestic violence, and bullying, the 180 production group announced that their Halloween-themed play, *Devil's Playground*, is set to hit the stage this Oct. 31 at the Victory Chapel building in Chalan Piao, across the Hopwood soccer field.

Written by young Saipan artists in their production group, the original storyline not only focuses on tough issues but also portray hope in these circumstances.

180 outreach director Alexander Depich said the group had come together to flesh out the play and, with the many events the island has been facing and even some personal trauma some 180 members have had, they incorporated everything with a Halloween flavor to make the Devil's Playground.

After tireless preparations, they are excited to unveil the project for the public, and hope to convey that, even with all the darkness, there is always hope.

The show is free for the public, and will begin Halloween night at 7pm. Depich did warn that there will be some topics that are hard to understand for younger children, so parental guidance is recommended.

When asked why there is no cost to the public for the event, Depich said, "The team and I feel that the message of the play needs to be seen and heard, and so we've decided to not only invest our time, but also in a way come together and 'pay it forward,' hoping to make a show that's entertaining, haunting, and yet bring hope at the end, especially for those who may be going through something similar. It may be another Halloween event on island, but for us in 180, it's our passion to hold events like these, and we want to welcome everyone to check it out."

CHRYSTAL MARINO

Saipan's 180 Production youths practice their scene in the production's latest play, *Devil's Playground,* during a practice last Thursday in Chalan Piao.

CHRYSTAL MARINO

Members of the Saipan 180 Production team rehearse a scene in their latest play, *Devil's Playground,* during a practice last Thursday in Chalan Piao.

# MVA, 500 Sails promote the CNMI's indigenous culture

To give visitors to the Marianas a chance to engage with the islands' traditional sailing culture, the Marianas Visitors Authority is partnering with non-profit organization 500 Sails to make canoes and navigational storytelling accessible at major beaches on Saipan.

The MVA has pledged $10,000 toward the Beach Canoes Project, which is already providing canoe rides from the beach at Hyatt Regency Saipan.

"This is an extraordinary opportunity for our visitors to learn about and experience one of the fundamental components of indigenous Carolinian and Chamorro culture in the Marianas," said MVA managing director Christopher A. Concepcion. "Beach Canoe Project is a double win, giving visitors an invigorating memory sailing our quiet lagoon and strengthening our community through the preservation of our history and traditional culture as renowned sailing people."

500 Sails will use the MVA funding support to further expand the Beach Canoe Project to other beach sites on Saipan through Jan. 31, 2024.

The Chamorro people, believed to have sailed to and settled the Marianas from Southeast Asia about 4,000 years ago, were noted upon first Spanish contact for the speed of their "flying proa" or outrigger canoes. The Carolinians, who migrated to the Marianas en masse from the Carolinian Islands of Micronesia in the 1800s, are renowned for their traditional navigational skills passed through the generations that use stars and other heavenly bodies, waves, currents, marine life, and other natural phenomena for trans-pacific voyaging, without modern instruments.

"What the tourists will experience in the Marianas is rare—an intimate and genuine cultural experience with traditional Micronesian canoes and the native people who build and sail them," said 500 Sails co-founder Pete Perez. "These canoes of ancient design are beautiful, colorful, and exciting to see in action on the water. Visitors can walk up to them, take pictures, touch them, and sail with local crew who will welcome them and share stories of how these canoes shaped our island culture and society. It is a chance to glimpse the world of our ancestors—to feel the thrill of sailing across the lagoon in a traditional canoe."

During this introductory period, free canoe rides (donations accepted) are being offered from Thursdays from 4pm to 6pmat Hyatt Regency Saipan beachside. Additional rides will be offered from Nov. 9, 2023, to Jan. 31, 2024, from 3:30pm to 5:30pm from additional hotel beachfront locations to be announced.

For more information, contact 500 Sails at facebook.com/500Sails, info@500sails.org, or 1.670.323.7245. ***(MVA)***

500 SAILS

In support of indigenous Carolinian and Chamorro culture, 500 Sails and the Marianas Visitors Authority are partnering to provide visitors and residents on free canoe rides in the Marianas at select beachfront properties through Jan. 31, 2024.

**COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY**
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**JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT # 01-2024**

**Opening date: October 30, 2023** **Closing date: November 17, 2023**

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| **Location:** | **SAIPAN** | **SALARY** |
| **Position(s):** | (1) ARFF Mechanic II | PL 6/1 to 6/12 ($9.27/hr to $15.85/hr) |
| | (1) Master Electrician | PL 19/1 to 19/12 ($17.48/hr to $29.90/hr) |
| **Location:** | **PORT OF SAIPAN** | |
| **Position(s):** | (1) Secretary II | PL 9/1 to 9/12 ($10.73/hr to $19.35/hr) |
| **Location:** | **TINIAN** | **SALARY** |
| **Position(s):** | (1) Custodial | PL 1/1 to 1/12 ($7.26/hr to $12.42/hr) |
| | (1) General Maintenance | PL 2/1 to 2/12 ($7.63/hr to $13.04/hr) |
| | (4) Ports Police/ARFF Trainee | PL 5/1 ($8.83/hr) |
| **Location:** | **ROTA** | **SALARY** |
| **Position(s):** | (1) Custodial/Maintenance-I | PL 2/1 to 2/12 ($7.63/hr to $13.04/hr) |

Employment Application must be accompanied with a copy of all required diploma/certificates and/or official sealed transcripts, original copy of recent police record not more than six (6) months old, original copy of U.S. Department of Defense Form DD214 for retired members or veterans of our Armed Forces, and other documents as required for the position. Public Law 11-70 requires that all male applicants age 18 to 25 years old must submit documentation evidencing his registration with the Federal Selective Service System. All applications and required documents must be submitted to the ***CPA Administration Office, 2nd Floor Arrival Building, Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport or CPA Administration Office, Tinian International Airport, or Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport.*** Failure to provide any of the required documents will result in automatic disqualification. Certain vacancies may require written and/or physical test. Selected applicants will be subjected to pre-employment drug screening, 10-year Criminal History Record Check and 49 CFR Part 1542.209(d) Requirements. CPA reserves the right to waive or implement other qualifications to meet its needs. The deadline for submission of applications and required documents to the CPA Administration Office (Saipan) or at the Tinian International Airport or Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport is no later than **5:00 P.M. on Friday, November 17, 2023.**

Detailed information on qualifications and position descriptions for the above positions may be picked up along with the application form from Monday-Friday, 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., except on holidays, at the CPA Administration Office (2nd Floor) of the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, Arrival Terminal or CPA Admin, Office at the Tinian International Airport or at the Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport. For additional information, please contact the CPA Human Resources Office by email at lorna.robert@cnmiports.com and hrspecialist@cnmiports.com or by phone at (670)237-6500.

CPA is an Equal Opportunity Employer and CPA hires those who are legally entitled to employment in the CNMI.

WENDI PRATER
Acting Executive Director

**COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY (CPA)**
Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
2nd Floor Arrival Bldg.
P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950
Phone: (670) 237-6500/1 • Fax: (670) 234-5962
E-Mail Address: cpa.admin@pticom.com • Website: www.cnmiports.com

**AMENDED**
**NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING**

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) Board of Directors hereby gives notice that a special meeting is being called on Tuesday, October 31, 2023, at 9:30 a.m. at the Aircraft Rescue & Fire Fighting (ARFF) Classroom located in the Airport Fire Station, Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, Saipan. The following items are on the agenda for the above referenced meeting:

**AGENDA**

**I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS:**
1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Adoption of Minutes

**II. PUBLIC COMMENT(S)**

**III. SPECIAL MEETING ITEM(S):**
1. Reorganization of the Board: Election of Chairman

**IV. EXECUTIVE SESSION (if needed)**

**V. MISCELLANEOUS/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**VI. ADJOURNMENT**

All interested persons are welcome to attend and to submit written or oral testimony on the above agenda items. A time limit may be imposed. Video Conferencing is also available via Zoom.
Zoom link: Meeting ID: 898 0318 0837 Passcode: 573227

RAMON A. TEBUTEB
Acting Chairman, Board of Directors

**COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY**
**CNMI GOVERNMENT**
Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, 2nd Floor Arrival Bldg.
P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950 |
Phone: (670) 237-6500/1 • Fax: (670) 234-5962
Website: www.cnmiports.com

**NOTICE OF INVITATION FOR BID ADVERTISING CONCESSION AT THE FRANCISCO MANGLONA BORJA/TINIAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT**

**Project No.: CPA-IFB-005-23**
**CPA Concession No.: TAD-2023-01-02**

Notice is hereby given that the Commonwealth Ports Authority (the "CPA") is accepting sealed bids, subject to the terms and conditions of the Invitation for Bid (the "IFB"), and other contract provisions, for bids from firms, companies, and/or corporations for Advertising Opportunities at the Francisco Manglona Borja/Tinian International Airport.

The IFB will be issued and available for pick-up beginning September 27, 2023, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday to Friday, at the Administration Office, 2nd Floor, Arrival Building, Saipan International Airport or at the CPA Office located at the Francisco Manglona Borja/ Tinian International Airport. CPA offices are closed every other Monday beginning Monday, October 2, 2023 for austerity reasons and also on holidays. The IFB includes layouts of the advertisement area and other requirements. All responses to this IFB shall also take into account any and/or all costs that will be charged to the bidder awarded the contract for the project. Prospective bidders will be required to pay an administrative fee of $100.00 for costs associated with handling and consideration of the bid.

Questions and/or clarification concerning this project shall be in writing and sent to the attention of the Tinian Port Manager, Antonio L. Borja through email at alborja@cnmiports.com with copy to Joy Ann Tenorio at joy.tenorio@cnmiports.com no later than October 11, 2023.

All bids shall be sealed and marked on the cover package outside as follows: "INVITATION FOR BID SUBMISSION: CONFIDENTIAL, ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITIES, COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY CPA-IFB-005-23." One (1) original and two (2) copies of the bid must be submitted no later than 2:00 p.m. Chamorro Standard Time, October 31, 2023, to the Authority Administration Section, Office of the Executive Director, 2nd Floor, Arrival Building, Saipan International Airport.

Bids will be opened on October 31, 2023, at 3:00p.m. at the Commonwealth Ports Authority Meeting Room, Saipan International Airport. Bids are not required to include a prepaid minimum concession fee. The concessions are for the right to advertise at certain designated locations within the Francisco Manglona Borja/Tinian International Airport for a period of two (2) years and requires the concessionaire to operate such concession to the satisfaction of the Commonwealth Ports Authority.

The Commonwealth Ports Authority reserves the right to reject any or all bids for any reason, if in its sole opinion to do so, would be in CPA's best interest. CPA further reserves the right to waive any defects in said bids if in its sole opinion to do so would be in CPA's best interest. All bids shall become property of the Commonwealth Ports Authority.

FOR THE COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director

9/25/2023
Date

# Rota farmer adopts commercial regenerative agriculture

NMC

Ambrosio "Ambi" Alubia at his farm on Rota.

Ambrosio "Ambi" Alubia, a longstanding Rota-based farmer, has recently taken significant steps toward incorporating regenerative agriculture into his farming portfolio.

In June 2023, he participated in the Regenerative Agriculture Workshop of the Northern Marianas College's Cooperative Research, Extension, and Education Services designed for commercial farmers. Following this workshop, he expressed his intention to engage in the application process for commercial farmer's regenerative agriculture technical assistance.

Alubia, who has been farming on Rota since 1992, is known for selling his produce locally on the island and exporting to Saipan and Guam. His decision to explore regenerative agriculture is a response to his growing interest in sustainable farming practices.

Reflecting on his experience, Alubia stated, "I've actively participated in NMC workshops in the past, but I am especially excited about initiating a new farm plot for Regenerative Ag/Agroforestry in collaboration with NMC-CREES."

Alubia also encouraged fellow farmers and prospective agricultural enthusiasts to consider the workshops and services offered by NMC-CREES, highlighting the expertise of Dr. Craig Elevitch, a Regenerative Agriculture expert, and Jesse Deleon Guerrero, an Agroforestry & Nutrition Security extension agent.

Alubia's new regenerative agriculture plot is set to include a variety of crops such as hot pepper, tomato, avocado, dragon fruit, calamansi, papaya, daikon radish, buckwheat, and cover crops, with the goal of optimizing regenerative farming practices.

Regenerative Agriculture offers several advantages, including the potential for improved crop yields and crop quality, increased resilience against market fluctuations and extreme weather conditions, as well as the capacity to sequester carbon and enhance nitrogen management while maintaining profitability.

Alubia's decision to incorporate commercial regenerative agriculture into his farming endeavors underscores a growing interest in sustainable and regenerative farming practices within the Rota farming community.

Interested community members who would like to learn more about regenerative agriculture can attend the upcoming workshops by NMC-CREES on Nov. 4 and 11 on Saipan and Nov. 8 and 9 on Tinian and Rota. To register, visit bit.ly/AGWS23, email crees@marianas.edu, or call (670) 237-6840. ***(NMC)***

## Caregiver Bootcamp to start in November

Guam Community College is calling all individuals interested in becoming a caregiver to sign up for the free Medical Home Health Aide (Caregiver) Bootcamp by Monday, Nov. 13, 2023. Bootcamp curriculum includes Work Keys, Work Ethic, OSHA, Heart Savers First Aid CPR AED, and Medical Home Health Aide (Caregiver).

Caregivers offer essential assistance to individuals who are ailing or elderly, enabling family members to pursue their education or gainful employment to support their family's well-being. Graduates of the bootcamp program will possess the skills to deliver care in various settings, including private homes, clinics, and hospitals.

The bootcamp also serves as a pathway to GCC's Allied Health Programs. They have the option to continue their educational journey by pursuing programs such as an Associate of Science in Medical Assisting, an Associate of Science in Practical Nursing, certification as a Certified Nursing Assistant, or obtaining certification as an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT). All these programs are available at GCC allowing for a smooth transition.

Contact GCC's Office of Continuing Education and Workforce Development to learn more about this bootcamp which you can avail of at no or little cost to you—email workforce@guamcc.edu or call 671-735-5640. ***(GCC)***

# Early registration opens next week for upcoming semester at UOG

Early registration opens next week at the University of Guam for students who want to get ahead with the Fañomnåkan semester that starts on Jan. 17, 2024.

The registration schedule is as follows:

- Nov. 1 to Dec. 1, 2023 — Graduate students, seniors with 91 credits or more, Regent scholars, National Student Exchange students, and veterans.
- Nov. 8 to Nov. 30 — juniors
- Nov. 15 to Nov. 30, sophomores
- Nov. 22 to Nov. 30, freshmen
- Dec. 4 to Dec. 11 — Continuing and returning students in all class levels who want to use self-service registration.

Students who need help registering can contact an Admissions counselor at:

- Phone: (671) 735-2214/735-2202
- Email: admitme@triton.uog.edu
- Go to: Registration@uog.edu

To learn more about available courses and times, tuition payment/deadline, Financial Aid and other information, click this link:

- https://www.uog.edu/admissions/course-schedule. ***(PR)***

## GCC BRIEFS

### GCC spring registration opens today

The Guam Community College spring semester 2024 registration will begin today, Oct. 30, 2023. The spring '24 class schedule will also be available at that time.

New and returning students can register online at GuamCC.edu/Apply or in person at the Administration Building 2000, from Monday to Friday from 8am to 5pm. Academic advisors, financial aid personnel, and admissions staff will be available to assist students in Building 2000. The last day to register for classes is Friday, Jan. 5, 2024.

Important email addresses and phone numbers:

- Admissions, Registration and Academic Advisement
  - ❖ gcc.regsitrar@guamcc.edu
  - ❖ 671-735-5531
- Financial Aid
  - ❖ financialaid@guamcc.edu
  - ❖ 671-735-5543
- Health Services Center
  - ❖ gcc.healthcenter@guamcc.edu
  - ❖ 671-735-5586

For clearance requirements log on to guamcc.edu/HealthCenter

Important spring 2024 Dates:

- Last day of registration: 5pm, Friday, Jan. 5, 2024
- First day of the semester: Wednesday. Jan. 10, 2024

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid, or FAFSA, application will be available in December 2023 online. The application is currently undergoing some mandatory revisions. The application is open and free to everyone. Use GCC's school code #015361 when prompted to be sure the GCC financial aid office receives your application. ***(GCC)***

### GCC fall 2023 College Assembly on Tuesday

Guam Community College will be holding its fall 2023 College Assembly to provide required professional development training for all faculty, staff and administrators on Tuesday, Oct. 31, 2023 from 8am to 4pm.

The campus will be closed during this time. Postsecondary classes will resume as scheduled beginning at 4pm.

For more information, contact John Dela Rosa, GCC assistant director of Communications & Promotions, at 671-735-5638 (office), 671-482-4320 (cell), or john.delarosa@guamcc.edu. ***(GCC)***

## EARTHQUAKE BRIEFS

### 5.2-magnitude quake near Yigo, Guam

At 6:11pm on Oct. 18, 2023, a report of a 5.2-magnitude earthquake occurred near Yigo Village, Guam. Currently, there are no reports of injuries or damage and no tsunami warnings or advisories were issued by the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center.

For more information, contact the CNMI EOC State Warning Point at 670-237-8000. ***(PR)***

### 5.3-magnitude quake near Pagan

At 6:08pm on Oct. 28, 2023, a report of a 5.3-magnitude earthquake occurred near Pagan Region, Northern Marianas Islands. Currently, there are no reports of injuries or damage and no tsunami warnings or advisories were issued by the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center.

For more information, contact the CNMI EOC State Warning Point at 237-8000. ***(PR)***


**NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION**
P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp • Website: http://www.cnmi-cdbgdr.com

**INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)**
**NMHC IFB 2024-001**

**(This ad is paid by NMHC by HUD funds)**

**BID SUBMISSION DATE:** November 08, 2023, 2:00 p.m.

**PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM (PSS) TINIAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL REHABILITATION PROJECT- PHASE II**

Project Package will be available on October 09, 2023, at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan, during regular working hours (7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) Monday thru Friday except CNMI holidays. A non-refundable payment of One-Hundred Dollars ($100.00) is required for each set of the project package. Payment must be made payable to NMHC and receipt of payment must be presented when obtaining the project package at the reception counter.

The provisions on the NMHC Procurement regulations, NMIAC 100-60-725 AND 100-60-730 Prohibiting Gratuities, Kickbacks and Contingent Fees shall apply.

A Mandatory Pre-Bid Conference will be held at the NMHC Field Office in Tinian located at the NMC Campus in Tinian on October 20, 2023, 10:00 a.m. In addition, a Mandatory site Visit/Inspection of the project site will be conducted immediately after the Pre-Bid Conference. Failure to attend both the Mandatory Pre-bid conference and the Mandatory site Visit/Inspection will be considered a non-responsive bidder.

For more information, contact Mr. Jacob Muna, Office Manager, at (670) 234-9447 or via email at officemanager@nmhcgov.net during business hours, 7:30am – 4:30pm Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays.

/s/ JESSE S. PALACIOS
Corporate Director

/s/ MERCED "MARCIE" M. TOMOKANE
Chairwoman
NMHC Board of Directors



**NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION**
P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp | Website: http://www.nmhcgov.net

**INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)**
**NMHC IFB 2024-002**

***(This ad is paid for NMHC with HUD funds)***

**BID SUBMISSION DATE & TIME:** November 13, 2023, 2:00 p.m.

**200-foot Communication Tower for the Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEM) Project at Mt. Tapochau, Saipan**

Project Package will be available on October 13, 2023, at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan, during regular working hours (7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) Monday thru Friday except CNMI holidays. A non-refundable payment of One-Hundred Dollars ($100.00) is required for each set of the project package. Payment must be made payable to NMHC and receipt of payment must be presented when obtaining the project package at the reception counter.

The provisions on the NMHC Procurement regulations, NMIAC 100-60-725 AND 100-60-730 Prohibiting Gratuities, Kickbacks and Contingent Fees shall apply.

A Mandatory Pre-Bid Conference will be held at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan on **October 24, 2023, 10:00 a.m.** In addition, a Mandatory site Visit/Inspection of the project site will be conducted immediately after the Pre-Bid Conference. Failure to attend both the Mandatory Pre-bid conference and the Mandatory site Visit/Inspection will be considered a non-responsive bidder.

For more information, contact Mr. Jacob Muna, Office Manager, at (670) 234-9447 or via email at officemanager@nmhcgov.net during business hours, 7:30am – 4:30pm Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays.

/s/ Jesse S. Palacios
Corporate Director

/s/ Merced "Marcie" M. Tomokane
Chairwoman
NMHC Board of Directors

# Joint responders rescue missing divers offshore of Guam

**SANTA RITA, Guam—**In a display of teamwork, a successful search and rescue operation unfolded Oct. 28, as the U.S. Coast Guard and U.S. Navy searched for and rescued three missing divers near Santa Rosa Banks, approximately 25 nautical miles off the coast of Agat, Guam.

Following search patterns designed by the U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/ Sector Guam Joint Rescue Sub-Center team, Navy Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 25 personnel, using an MH-60 Knighthawk helicopter, located the three divers a few miles from their original location at about 3:45pm and performed a successful hoist operation, ensuring their safe rescue.

Watchstanders at JRSC Guam received the initial distress call from the operator of the dive boat at approximately 1pm after the divers failed to surface at 11am as planned, prompting an immediate and urgent response. The three men reportedly embarked on a recreational dive south of Guam, wearing distinctive bright T-shirts with diving lights and safety sausages. All three divers are considered very experienced; their emergency plan was to surface together if they encountered any issues.

Dedicated teams swiftly mobilized for the rescue operation. Responding units included the JRSC Guam team, U.S. Coast Guard Station Apra Harbor using a 45-foot Response Boat-Medium, and HSC-25.

The critical aviation support provided by the HSC-25 Knighthawk crew proved vital to the success of this mission. There are no reported injuries, but responders delivered the divers to U.S. Naval Hospital Guam for an additional check-up out of caution.

Lt. Cmdr. Christine Igisomar expressed her gratitude for the dedicated response crews, saying, "This successful rescue underscores the exceptional skills and dedication of our search and rescue teams. Their swift efforts, combined with the crucial aviation support, played a pivotal role in ensuring the safety of these divers. In this region with vast swaths of open ocean, aviation support is often the lifeline that makes all the difference."

Weather conditions in the area were favorable during the operation, with winds blowing from the east at 13 mph and seas reaching up to 3 feet. ***(USCG)***

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER SARA MUIR

An MH-65 Dolphin helicopter crew deployed to Guam from U.S. Coast Guard Air Station Barbers Point in Hawaii flies patterns to assess winds and terrain before conducting rescue hoist training at Sella Bay Overlook in Guam on March 8, 2023.

## Committee passes Amata's South Pacific Tuna Treaty Act

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Delegate Uifa'atali Amata (R-AS) during the U.S. House of Representatives' Natural Resources Committee vote on her bill last Thursday.

**WASHINGTON, D.C.—**Delegate Uifa'atali Amata (R-AS) is welcoming Thursday's passage by the Natural Resources Committee of a bill she sponsored, with Congressman Ed Case (D-HI) as the original cosponsor, the South Pacific Tuna Treaty Act, H.R. 1792, which passed for consideration by the full House of Representatives.

H.R. 1792 is a bipartisan effort to congressionally direct full implementation of the South Pacific Tuna Treaty, as previously diplomatically negotiated among the U.S. and Pacific nations.

"It's good to see this bill take this step forward with bipartisan support in this vote, and I appreciate working with Congressman Case, and the key support of Chairman Westerman," said Amata. "Congress has a clear oversight role in implementing this important treaty, ensuring that our negotiated tuna agreements in the Pacific are working to the benefit of our fleet. Undoubtedly, U.S. tuna production continues to face hurdles, but this diplomatic and legislative effort brings stability to the access that our fleet depends on. All U.S. policymakers should support tuna as a healthy food source for millions of Americans that strengthens our national food security."

Chairman Bruce Westerman (R-Ark.) said, "H.R. 1792 is a bipartisan, commonsense bill that will provide more flexibility to the U.S. fishing industry to the benefit of all Americans and anyone who enjoys our incredible seafood products worldwide. Representative Radewagen has been a longtime leader on this issue and I know she will continue advocating for strong relationships in the Pacific. I am excited to see this bill pass through our committee today."

The bill amends the South Pacific Tuna Treaty Act of 1988 to reflect the amendments to the Treaty adopted in 2016. In 2022, the Senate provided overwhelming bipartisan support for advice and consent to ratification, and this bill would complete this longstanding effort, moving into statute what has been operating under a Memorandum of Understanding, and resolving restrictions.

The Treaty stabilizes high seas fishing days and codifies access to various island nations' EEZ waters.

In July, the bill was examined in a legislative hearing by the Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife and Fisheries, which heard expert testimony, including from William Gibbons-Fly, Executive Director, American Tunaboat Association. He emphasized the last true "distant water fishing fleet" under the U.S. flag operating from Pago Pago Harbor, as "multi-generational, family-owned businesses with a long and storied history as an important part of the U.S. fishing industry."

The U.S. tuna purse seine fleet has been reduced in just a few years from 34 vessels to 13 vessels, as the fleet faced numerous severe economic challenges from increased regulation, reduced access, and more competition especially from Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated fishing. ***(PR)***

## USCG dispatches assistance to Vanuatu in cyclone's aftermath

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The U.S. Coast Guard immediately flew a crew to the island nation of Vanuatu last Oct. 26, 2023, following the devastating impact of Tropical Cyclone Lola.

**HONOLULU—**The U.S. Coast Guard was on scene to provide timely assistance and support to the island nation of Vanuatu last Oct. 26, 2023, following the devastating impact of Tropical Cyclone Lola.

Tropical Cyclone Lola moved through the South Pacific island chain earlier this week inflicting significant damage. The Vanuatu Meteorology and Geo-hazards Department, Port Vila, issued the final warning, indicating that the storm was no longer a threat to the island nation prompting assessment and the disaster relief process.

The Coast Guard received the request in the afternoon of Oct. 25 from the U.S. Embassy Port Moresby to support the government of Vanuatu with post-storm overflight and assessment of ports and critical infrastructure following Tropical Cyclone Lola.

"The Coast Guard's C-130 mission is a testament to our commitment to provide critical support and capabilities to Vanuatu during these challenging times," said Cmdr Andrew Williams, the enforcement branch chief for District 14. "Our C-130, deployed in support of the Forum Fisheries Agency-Operation Kuru Kuru, has been diverted to perform post-storm assessments of the affected areas, contributing to response and recovery efforts."

Vanuatu is a South Pacific island nation, roughly made up of 80 islands with a population of approximately 335,000 individuals. It is located about 1,090 miles east of Australia. Vanuatu has two shipping ports, the Port of Vila and the Port of Luganville in Santo, that ensure supplies are delivered to the island and its inhabitants.

The Coast Guard leverages unique capabilities and expertise as a first responder to all threats and hazards in the maritime environment and life-saving service. Coast Guard aircraft capabilities serve multiple functions including damage assessment of the affected area, search and rescue, real-time situational awareness for senior leaders, logistical support for safe transportation and supply delivery, environmental hazard monitoring, and public safety communication.

The Coast Guard remains dedicated to assisting the international community in times of need. This mission exemplifies the organization's commitment to ensuring the safety and well-being of those affected by natural disasters, even in distant corners of the world. ***(USCG)***

# Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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MEMBER

The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

## EDITORIAL

# Mike Johnson wins the gavel, for now

AP

Rep. Mike Johnson, R-La., takes the oath to be the new House speaker from the Dean of the House Rep. Hal Rogers, R-Ky., at the Capitol in Washington, Wednesday, Oct. 25, 2023.

The House Republican spasm that began with bomb thrower Matt Gaetz's vendetta against Speaker Kevin McCarthy and saw the conference's civil war cycle through five leaders in three exhausting weeks seems to have cooled with Wednesday's election by the unanimous GOP members of new Speaker Mike Johnson (or is it Mike Jackson)?

We were so unfamiliar with this Louisianan from Shreveport that we didn't know his name or his face before he rose to the top Tuesday night after Speaker-designate Tom Emmer's tenure died after four hours.

Emmer won the title after he beat eight rivals (including Johnson) who ran after Speaker-designate Jim Jordan was rejected by the GOP members following three failed elections on the House floor, when moderates refused to put the radical second in line to the presidency. Emmer garnered a majority of his Republican peers after five secret ballots, which could have done much more efficiently on a single tally using ranked choice voting. But the right wing balked because Emmer supported gay marriage and accepted Joe Biden's victory over Donald Trump. Trump also trashed Emmer.

But before Speaker-designate Johnson and Speaker-designate Emmer and Speaker-designate Jordan there was Speaker-designate Steve Scalise. He lasted a full day before quitting when the crazies vowed not to vote for him. We think that brings us up to date.

Johnson just saw his congressional salary jump 28.4% from the rank-and-file annual pay of $174,000 to the speaker's post of $223,500. In New York politics, that extra money for legislators is called a lulu, and they are so rare in Congress that there are only three in each chamber, two for the majority and one for the minority. In fact, it was us who informed Brooklynites Chuck Schumer and Hakeem Jeffries that they were getting raises when they joined the top rung of leadership.

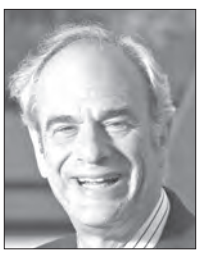
But back to Johnson. Who is this guy who's only in his fourth term and is now in charge? He is a Trump fan who won his first election in 2016, when Trump won. In 2020, Johnson was the main instigator in the House of a hopeless legal effort to have the courts throw out the Electoral College results in

*See MIKE on Page 9*

# Some scientists say we don't have free will. As a philosopher I say, of course we do

**By JOHN MARTIN FISCHER**
Los Angeles Times

*John Martin Fischer is a professor of philosophy at UC Riverside and has written widely on free will and moral responsibility.*



A new book by a Stanford neurobiologist offers a jarring proposition: that humans do not have free will and thus cannot be considered morally responsible for our actions. In "Determined: A Science of Life Without Free Will," Robert Sapolsky contends that much harm comes from our belief in free will: needless anxiety and guilt, unjust and cruel penal institutions and so forth.

Perhaps surprisingly, these views—which seem so unintuitive—have become more influential in contemporary philosophy and even legal theory. They are, nevertheless, a minority opinion. Although philosophy isn't about majority rule (nor should it be!), many of us inside the field—and likely outside it, too—find this skepticism toward free will and moral responsibility deeply problematic.

Sapolsky and others contend that we lack free will based on determinism. According to this doctrine, everything is fully caused and explained by the past and laws of nature, meaning human actions result entirely from the external factors that lead up to them. This view raises two questions: Is our world truly deterministic? And if so, would this imply we lack free will?

Some neurobiologists, including Sapolsky, hold that neurobiology supports determinism—that the brain activity science has uncovered reveals essentially mechanical procedures that cause human decisions. Other neuroscientists believe that at a fundamental level the brain works indeterministically, perhaps in accordance with quantum mechanics, which allows for randomness and unpredictability. In other words, whether the past and laws of nature dictate my choices and actions remains scientifically controversial.

But let's say determinism were true. Why exactly would it follow that we lack free will? Even if our choices and actions are shaped heavily by external factors, couldn't they still be caused in a way that involves the human capacity for reasoning? Coughs, sneezes, seizures—these behaviors are easy to dismiss as beyond our control. Not all causal chains, however, are like those that trigger involuntary movements. Equating all human behavior to a cough is an egregiously hasty generalization.

Consider, as a simple example, my decision to sit down at my computer to write these sentences. Yes, my past and the laws of nature may have crucially led me here. But I did so also because of deliberation. I weighed the pros for writing against the cons and chose to do it. It wasn't like a sneeze; it was a process that involved reasoning. Determinism helps explain why I started typing, but it does not in itself rule out my free will.

The "why" might additionally involve exercises of free will that confer responsibility—and thus we cannot dismiss moral responsibility because we are machines. We are biological machines, but the biology does not get in the way of free will. It enables it, just as our neurobiology enables our thoughts and feelings.

We live in a world with horrors almost too terrible to imagine. That no one could fairly be blamed or punished for anything is a view as disturbing as it is radical. It would entail that Vladimir Putin could not be morally blamed or punished for documented war crimes; he would not deserve such treatment. Moral responsibility skepticism implies that Hitler did not deserve to be morally blamed or punished, nor did Stalin or any mass murderer.

The skeptical view asks us to do what is almost humanly impossible: to let even our worst actors off the hook. Of course, the same point applies to good behavior: Heroes such as Sully Sullenberger would not deserve our gratitude, and your friend who sacrifices her plans so she can pick you up at LAX wouldn't merit it either. (Sometimes, though, even this requires heroism!)

The skeptics offer a replacement for responsibility: We could still seek to rehabilitate or confine dangerous individuals; we could still morally cajole and educate those who have hurt us. This kind of view, however, leaves out what is so difficult to deny: that some deeds and some people deserve blame and resentment, much as others deserve praise and gratitude. Some deserve our indignation and others our love. It is hard to imagine a richly textured and meaningful human life without moral responsibility—or free will, for that matter.

Why abandon something so important? The skeptics say we lack free will. But we should not abandon the framework that holds together the human experience based on controversial and inadequately supported views about our agency. We should not reject something so big on the basis of something so little.

In a beautiful vision of the no-responsibility world, people are liberated from forces over which they have no control. But there is an ugly side too. Consider that Barbara Fried, a professor emerita at Stanford Law School, has argued against free will and moral responsibility. Right now her son, Sam Bankman-Fried, is on trial for allegations that he looted billions from customers of his collapsed crypto exchange FTX. Under the skeptics' view, Bankman-Fried deserves no blame or responsibility. How convenient, but deeply wrong.

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# Americans treat mass shootings like natural disasters. As if we can do nothing to prevent them

**By PETER HANINK**
Los Angeles Times

*Peter Hanink is a criminology professor at Cal Poly Pomona.*

America witnessed yet another mass shooting on Wednesday, this time in the small city of Lewiston, Maine. While people were shocked by the scale and location of the shooting—with 18 people slain in a state with one the country's lowest homicide rates— no one was shocked that it occurred. Hearing how resigned commentators and politicians have become about yet another mass shooting emphasized something I've been thinking for a while: We've started treating mass shootings like natural disasters.

As a native Californian, I'm familiar with this approach. We grow up thinking of earthquakes as just a fact of life, destructive but unavoidable. Don't get me wrong, we take earthquakes seriously, but since there's nothing we can do to prevent them, we focus on preparing for them. We strengthen our homes, stock supplies in our earthquake kits and teach our kids to "duck and cover."

As mass shootings have increased in frequency and severity, we seem to have adopted a similar mindset. We can't prevent them; we can only prepare for them. After the 1999 shooting at Columbine High School—the event that ushered in the modern era of mass shootings—we have mostly responded by treating mass shootings like earthquakes.

We strengthened our schools by stationing resource officers on campus and installing better locks and stronger doors. Inspired by the refrain that "the only thing that stops a bad guy with a gun is a good guy with a gun," politicians and pundits concluded that we should expand concealed-carry licenses and arm teachers. We installed more cameras and metal detectors. We required students to bring clear plastic backpacks. We started conducting active shooter drills at our elementary schools, which replaced "duck and cover" with " run, hide, fight." We turned our schools into fortresses and our children into watchers on the wall.

And still mass shootings keep happening and we resign ourselves to the conclusion that we can only prepare for them. It makes sense. At some point, the earth is going to quake, the tornado is going to touch down, the hurricane is going to make landfall, so it's foolish to pretend it's not going to happen and it's smart to prepare for the worst.

But are mass shootings really like natural disasters?

A better way to think about them, really, is like fires. Of course, we take fires seriously and do a lot to prepare for them to reduce the damage they cause. We install smoke detectors and fire extinguishers, we hire firefighters and pay them to be on call, round the clock. We install fire doors, conduct fire drills and label evacuation routes. We require space between single family homes to limit the chance that fire could spread from one building to the next. We require folks in fire-prone areas to "harden their homes" by creating "defensible space" and clearing out dead brush.

But we don't stop there. We focus as well on fire prevention. Local governments establish building codes regulating everything from construction materials and building techniques to wiring standards. Even consumer goods from refrigerators to robot vacuums are inspected to make sure that they don't pose fire hazards.

Focusing on prevention doesn't stop us from preparing for disasters, it just makes them less likely. We can and should do the same for mass shootings. Common sense and widely supported reforms such as instituting background checks and red flag lists for people with histories of violence; eliminating loopholes that allow for unregulated firearms sales at gun shows; reducing magazine capacity; restricting "ghost guns"; and banning the general sale of military-style rifles, such as the AR-15, will make it harder for "bad guys" to get guns and will prevent hundreds, if not thousands, of deaths every year.

If it were enough to simply have more good guys with guns, the fact that there are more guns than people in the U.S. should have reduced the number of mass shootings. Instead, we have more than ever. We must do better.

# How new House Speaker Mike Johnson tried again and again to overturn Biden's election

**By ERWIN CHEMERINSKY**
Los Angeles Times

*Erwin Chemerinsky is a contributing writer to* Opinion *and the dean of the UC Berkeley School of Law. His latest book is* Worse Than Nothing: The Dangerous Fallacy of Originalism.

In less than 15 months, Congress will count and certify the votes from the electoral college. It is truly frightening that House Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., from the far right of the Republican Party, might have a prominent role in the process.

If Republicans keep control of the House in the November 2024 elections, it seems likely they will keep Johnson as speaker given their bitter divisions and difficulty in selecting someone for the position after Kevin McCarthy's ouster. Johnson was the primary proponent in the House of a way to overturn the 2020 election and keep Donald Trump in the presidency. He can be expected to do the same in 2024 if Trump is the Republican nominee and loses to President Joe Biden.

Johnson, a lawyer, led the House Republicans in promoting a baseless legal theory that state legislatures have sole power to select and appoint electors. This so-called "independent state legislature" theory maintains that a state legislature can allocate its electors however it wants, regardless of the popular vote and a law that requires that electors go to the presidential candidate who won the popular vote. The hope was that Republican-controlled legislatures in states won by Biden would allocate their electors to Trump and give him the presidency. This theory was rejected by the Supreme Court in June in Moore v. Harper.

Every court to consider any of the legal claims of Trump and his supporters like Johnson — whether state or federal judges, whether Democratic or Republican judges — found no basis for overturning the decision of the voters and the electoral college. None found evidence of voter fraud that would affect the outcome of the election, which Biden won by a huge margin.

Johnson, however, did all he could to promote false claims about the election process. He was a leader in supporting a lawsuit by Texas to have the Supreme Court decertify election results in four states won by Biden: Georgia, Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.

He argued that state officials had changed aspects of their election procedures, such as by making it easier to cast absentee ballots, before the November 2020 election. Johnson claimed these changes were invalid and therefore no electors should be counted from these states. Courts consistently upheld these changes by state election officials as necessary during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Johnson even circulated an email asking his Republican colleagues to sign on to the amicus brief in the Supreme Court supporting the state of Texas' lawsuit and the suppression of electoral votes from four states. Johnson said in the email that Trump "specifically asked me to contact all Republican Members of the House and Senate today and request that all join on to our brief." He added, ominously, that Trump "said he will be anxiously awaiting the final list to review."

More than 100 House Republicans signed the brief. Law professor John Eastman filed a brief for Trump in the Supreme Court advancing this same unfounded theory. Eastman is now facing possible disbarment in California for his role in trying to undermine the election and has been indicted in Georgia on charges of trying to overturn election results in that state.

The Supreme Court quickly rejected the Texas lawsuit. In a brief opinion, the court explained that Texas had no basis to sue to block the ability of other states to participate in the electoral college.

Undaunted, Johnson tried to get the House to refuse to certify the results of the election. He and 138 other Republican members voted against certification on Jan. 6, 2021, despite Biden winning the popular vote by more than 7 million votes and decisively winning in the electoral college.

Johnson repeatedly spread Trump's false claim that the election was rigged. He said i n a radio interview that a software system used for voting was "suspect because it came from Hugo Chávez's Venezuela." He declared, "You know the allegations about these voting machines, some of them being rigged with this software by Dominion, there's a lot of merit to that."

Now that Johnson is House speaker, there is no telling what he will do to undermine the election should Trump become the GOP nominee. Given his extreme loyalty to Trump and his efforts to spread outrageous lies and to nullify the 2020 election, the peril for the democratic process is very great.

## MIKE

*From page 8*

four states won by Biden.

In his speech Wednesday, he pledged to have a resolution in support of Israel be the first matter of business for the House, which did happen, passing with 412-10. But that bipartisan unity will not last long. And neither may Johnson.

The new speaker's father was a Shreveport firefighter who was badly burned in a 1984 blast that killed another firefighter and who died right before the younger Johnson was elected in 2016. Johnson should honor his dad, and all firefighters, by fully funding the World Trade Center Health Program, which covers the medical bills of first responders and others suffering from 9/11-related illnesses.

He'll have to deal with aid for Israel and Ukraine and funding of the government for the federal fiscal year that began on Oct. 1. It was McCarthy's correct deal with the Senate and White House to keep Uncle Sam going that caused Gaetz's rebellion. We note that Johnson voted to shut down the government.

Johnson will get his own chance in just 22 days, on Nov. 17, which is when McCarthy's deal expires. He better be careful or his speakership will be very brief.

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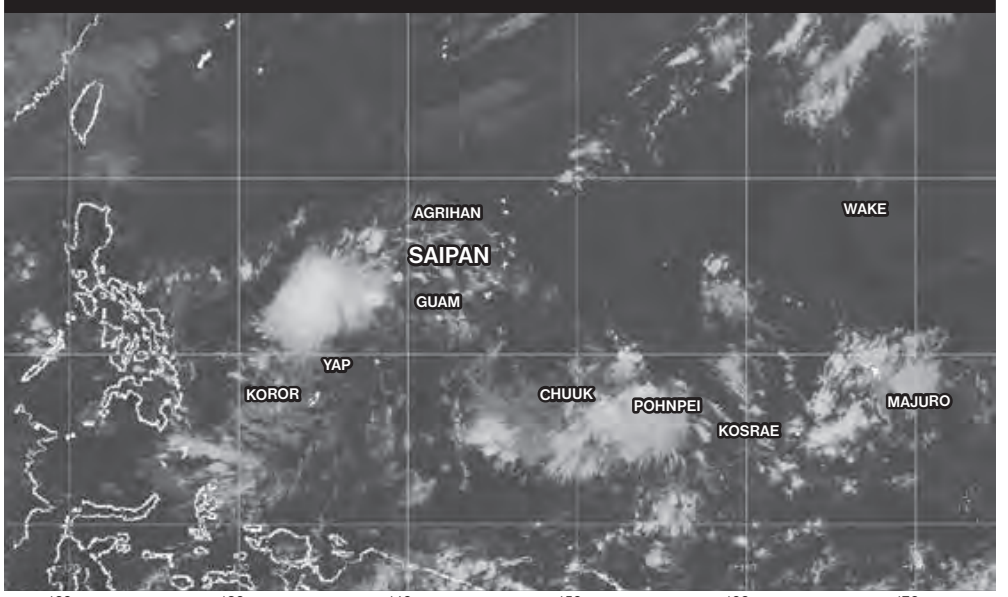
# The Weather

## 5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

| TODAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mostly cloudy with scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms. Southeast winds 10 to 15 mph. | Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph. | Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms. | Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms. | Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms. |
| 88 / 79° | 88 / 79° | 87 / 77° | 87 / 77° | 88 / 78° |

## YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE




**PICTURE TIME: 7:10 AM, SUNDAY, OCTOBER 29, 2023**

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A surface trough was just to the west of the Marianas this morning. Low-level convergence east of the trough axis will generate scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms over the Marianas this afternoon through Monday. A ridge of high pressure will build over the local area Monday night and cause showers and thunderstorms to decrease to isolated Monday night and Tuesday. Another surface trough will bring a higher chance of showers and thunderstorms to the Marianas Tuesday night.

*Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: https://www.weather.gov/gum/*

| MICRONESIA | | ▲ ▼ °F |
|---|---|---|
| Guam and Rota | Thunderstorms | 86° / 78° |
| Palau | Thunderstorms | 84° / 77° |
| Yap | Thunderstorms | 84° / 79° |
| Chuuk | Thunderstorms | 86° / 80° |
| Pohnpei | Thunderstorms | 85° / 77° |
| Kosrae | Thunderstorms | 85° / 77° |
| Majuro | Thunderstorms | 85° / 80° |

| DAY | SUNRISE | SUNSET |
|---|---|---|
| Today | 6:12 AM | 5:49 PM |
| Tuesday | 6:12 AM | 5:48 PM |
| Wednesday | 6:12 AM | 5:48 PM |
| Thursday | 6:13 AM | 5:47 PM |
| Friday | 6:13 AM | 5:47 PM |

| DAY | MOONRISE | MOONSET | MOONRISE |
|---|---|---|---|
| Today | - | 7:13 AM | 6:52 PM |
| Tuesday | - | 8:14 AM | 7:42 PM |
| Wednesday | - | 9:14 AM | 8:36 PM |
| Thursday | - | 10:12 AM | 9:31 PM |
| Friday | - | 11:06 AM | 10:27 PM |

| AROUND THE GLOBE | | ▲ ▼ °F |
|---|---|---|
| Auckland | Partly Cloudy | 66° / 59° |
| Beijing | Sunny | 68° / 48° |
| Hong Kong | Partly Cloudy | 82° / 72° |
| Honolulu | Partly Cloudy | 83° / 72° |
| London | Partly Cloudy | 55° / 45° |
| Los Angeles | Sunny | 87° / 62° |
| Manila | Showers | 88° / 75° |
| Melbourne | Partly Cloudy | 81° / 63° |
| Miami | Mostly Sunny | 79° / 72° |
| New York | Sunny | 65° / 55° |
| Osaka | Showers | 68° / 63° |
| Paris | Cloudy | 63° / 45° |
| Busan | Sunny | 70° / 61° |
| Rome | Mostly Sunny | 72° / 55° |
| Salem | Sunny | 76° / 53° |
| San Francisco | Sunny | 71° / 51° |
| Seoul | Partly Cloudy | 72° / 46° |
| Tokyo | Sunny | 73° / 46° |
| Washington, DC | Rain | 63° / 57° |

| TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY | | FEET |
|---|---|---|
| 2:23 AM | Low Tide | -0.36 |
| 9:03 AM | High Tide | 1.91 |
| 2:42 PM | Low Tide | 0.94 |
| 7:47 PM | High Tide | 1.91 |

**NEWS DESK** For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

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## FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF OCTOBER 30, 2023

### DEPARTURES

**SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| UA076 | 9:50AM | 10:30AM | Daily |

**SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| UA824 | 7:05AM | 9:45AM | 1, 3, 5 |

**GUAM-MANILA (MNL)**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| PR 111 | 5:55AM | 7:55AM | Daily |
| UA193 | 7:50PM | 11:50PM | 2, 5 via Palau |
| UA183 | 7:55PM | 9:50PM | Daily |

**SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 7C3403/2305 | 4:40AM | 10:20PM | Daily |
| UA076/183 | 9:50AM | 9:50PM | Daily via Guam |
| UA076/193 | 9:50AM | 11:50PM | 2, 5 via Guam, Palau |

**SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| TW308 | 2:15AM | 6:10AM | Daily |
| 7C3403 | 4:40AM | 8:35AM | Daily |
| 7C3405 | 4:35PM | 8:25PM | Daily |

### ARRIVALS

**GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| UA174 | 8:00AM | 8:45AM | Daily |

**NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| UA825 | 9:25PM | 2:00AM+1 | 2, 4, 7 |

**MANILA (MNL)-GUAM**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| UA189 | 00:40AM | 6:30AM | 3, 6 |
| PR110 | 10:05PM | 3:55AM+1 | Daily |
| UA192 | 10:40PM | 6:30AM+1 | 2, 5 via Palau |
| UA184 | 10:55PM | 4:45AM+1 | 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 |

**MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| UA189/174 | 00:40AM | 8:45AM+1 | 3, 6 via Guam |
| UA192/174 | 10:40PM | 8:45AM+1 | 2, 5 via Palau, Guam |
| UA184/174 | 10:55PM | 8:45AM+1 | 1, 3, 4, 6,7 via Guam |
| 7C2306/3406 | 11:15PM | 3:30PM+1 | Daily |

**INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 7C3406 | 10:10AM | 3:30PM | Daily |
| TW307 | 7:45PM | 1:15AM+1 | Daily |
| 7C3404 | 10:15PM | 3:35AM+1 | Daily |

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

## STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF OCTOBER 30, 2023

**SAIPAN TO ROTA**

| FLIGHT # | FROM | TO | DEPARTS | ARRIVES | FREQUENCY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1301 | SAIPAN | ROTA | 08:30 | 09:00 | Oct 21-31, 2023 |
| 1302 | SAIPAN | ROTA | 10:30 | 11:00 | Daily |
| 1303 | SAIPAN | ROTA | 15:30 | 16:00 | Daily |

**ROTA TO SAIPAN**

| FLIGHT # | FROM | TO | DEPARTS | ARRIVES | FREQUENCY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3101 | ROTA | SAIPAN | 9:30 | 10:00 | Oct 21-31, 2023 |
| 3102 | ROTA | SAIPAN | 11:30 | 12:00 | Saturday & Sunday |
| 3103 | ROTA | SAIPAN | 13:30 | 14:00 | Monday To Friday |
| 3104 | ROTA | SAIPAN | 16:30 | 17:00 | Daily |

**ROTA TO GUAM**

| FLIGHT # | FROM | TO | DEPARTS | ARRIVES | FREQUENCY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3401 | ROTA | GUAM | 11:30 | 12:00 | Monday To Friday |

**GUAM TO ROTA**

| FLIGHT # | FROM | TO | DEPARTS | ARRIVES | FREQUENCY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4301 | GUAM | ROTA | 12:30 | 13:00 | Monday To Friday |

**SAIPAN TO TINIAN**

| FLIGHT # | FROM | TO | DEPARTS | ARRIVES | FREQUENCY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1201 | SAIPAN | TINIAN | 7:30 | 7:45 | Daily |
| 1202 | SAIPAN | TINIAN | 8:00 | 8:15 | Daily |
| 1203 | SAIPAN | TINIAN | 9:00 | 9:15 | Daily |
| 1204 | SAIPAN | TINIAN | 10:00 | 10:15 | Daily |
| 1206 | SAIPAN | TINIAN | 15:00 | 15:15 | Daily |
| 1207 | SAIPAN | TINIAN | 16:00 | 16:15 | Daily |
| 1208 | SAIPAN | TINIAN | 17:00 | 17:15 | Daily |

**TINIAN TO SAIPAN**

| FLIGHT # | FROM | TO | DEPARTS | ARRIVES | FREQUENCY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2101 | TINIAN | SAIPAN | 8:00 | 8:15 | Daily |
| 2102 | TINIAN | SAIPAN | 8:30 | 8:45 | Daily |
| 2103 | TINIAN | SAIPAN | 9:30 | 9:45 | Daily |
| 2104 | TINIAN | SAIPAN | 10:30 | 10:45 | Daily |
| 2106 | TINIAN | SAIPAN | 15:30 | 15:45 | Daily |
| 2107 | TINIAN | SAIPAN | 16:30 | 16:45 | Daily |
| 2108 | TINIAN | SAIPAN | 17:30 | 17:45 | Daily |

# Business

# Boswell appointed AK Saipan VP and GM

Atkins Kroll, an Inchcape Company, announces the appointment of Clark Boswell as vice president and general manager for Atkins Kroll Saipan effective Oct.16, 2023.

Boswell

Boswell served as AK Saipan VP and GM July 2018 to February 2021. During his leadership Toyota maintained its position as market share leader in Saipan.

Boswell moved to Guam and served as AK Guam Operations director in 2021 before taking on a senior role for Operational Excellence with Inchcape APAC. In this role, he led the business integration with Inchcape's joint venture acquisition in both Philippines and Indonesia. Boswell also managed the region's digital platform program which launched a fully online omnichannel sales platform for Singapore and Hong Kong Toyota.

"We are happy for Clark's return to Saipan. His priorities include launching Lexus into the market, the opening of the new flagship Toyota & Lexus facility and raising service levels and fulfilment for our customers," said AK president Alex Yap. "I also wish to recognize our Finance director Julie Lee for serving as interim VP and GM since July. Julie made significant achievements during her short term to include an increase in market share from Q2 and the soft Introduction of Lexus to the island," concluded Yap. ***(AK Saipan)***

## 17TH ANNUAL TOYOTA DREAM CAR ART CONTEST UNVEILED

# AK invites young Guam, CNMI artists to draw their 'dream car'

**TAMUNING, Guam**—Atkins Kroll announced yesterday that the 17th Toyota Dream Car Art Contest is officially open for aspiring young artists in Guam and the CNMI under 15 years of age. This esteemed global art competition, the Toyota Dream Car Art Contest, celebrates youthful creativity, sparking an interest in mobility and encouraging the importance of nurturing one's dreams.

The Toyota Dream Car Art Contest invites children worldwide to test their imaginative skills by illustrating their vision of future mobility through dream car designs. Toyota firmly believes in fostering the inventive spirit of the next generation—those who will become the great inventors, thinkers, and dreamers of tomorrow.

"Every remarkable idea takes its first breath in a glimpse of a dream," said AK marketing & communications director Trina Cruz. "We urge students to let their imagination flow and illustrate their dream car concepts using their favorite artistic mediums, be it crayons, markers, watercolors, and notably, non-digital illustrations." The artwork should showcase their unique outlook on the future of mobility, she added.

"Atkins Kroll and our dedicated partners extend a warm invitation to teachers, school administrators, and parents to support and encourage their students' participation in this imaginative journey. We eagerly anticipate an influx of diverse and inclusive visions of future mobility from the inspirational young minds of our community," Cruz said.

Here are the vital details for the 17th Annual Toyota Dream Car Art Contest in Guam and CNMI:

- Theme: "Your Dream Car"
- Eligibility:

Category 1: Under eight years old

Category 2: 8 to 11 years old

Category 3: 12 to 15 years old

Deadline: Jan. 31, 2024

How to submit: Entries can be submitted via email to athena.ramos@akguam.com or in person at the Toyota showroom.

For comprehensive information, including official rules, entry guidelines, and submission instructions, please visit:

- Guam: www.AKguam.com/dreamcar
- Saipan: www.AKsaipan.com/dreamcar

Join us in nurturing the dreams that will pave the way for an exciting future in mobility. Your support can catalyze a young artist's journey toward greatness. Together, we can make dreams come true. ***(AK Saipan)***

ATKINS KROLL

Photos show samples of entries from previous years' Annual Toyota Dream Car Art Contest

# For 2nd Halloween in a row, US candy inflation hits double digits

By DEE-ANN DURBIN
AP BUSINESS WRITER

Spooked by the high price of Halloween candy? There's not much relief in sight.

For the second year in a row, U.S. shoppers are seeing double-digit inflation in the candy aisle. Candy and gum prices are up an average of 13% this month compared to last October, more than double the 6% increase in all grocery prices, according to Datasembly, a retail price tracker. That's on top of a 14% increase in candy and gum prices in October 2022.

"The price of candy has gotten to be outrageous," said Jessica Weathers, a small business owner in Shiloh, Illinois. "It doesn't make sense to me to spend $100 on candy."

Weathers said she usually buys plenty of candy for trick-or-treaters and events at school and church. But this year, she only bought two bags and plans to turn off her porch light on Halloween when she runs out.

Other consumers are changing what they buy. Numerator, a market research firm, said its surveys show about one-third of U.S. consumers plan to trade down to value or store brands when buying candy for trick-or-treaters this year.

Weather is the main culprit for the higher prices. Cocoa prices are trading at 44-year highs after heavy rains in West Africa caused limited production in the season that began last fall. Now, El Nino conditions are making the region drier and are likely to linger well into the spring.

"There may be no price relief in sight, at least through the first half of 2024," said Dan Sadler, principal of client insights for Circana, a market research firm.

Kelly Goughary, a senior research analyst with Gro Intelligence, an agricultural analytics firm, said Ivory Coast—which produces around 40% of the world's cocoa—is already showing the signs of one of its worst droughts since 2003.

Meanwhile, global sugar prices are at 12-year highs, Goughary said. India, the world's second-largest sugar producer after Brazil, recently banned sugar exports for the first time in seven years after monsoon rains hurt the upcoming harvest. Thailand's output is also down.

Those costs, combined with increases for labor, packaging, and ingredients like peanuts, are pushing up prices for all kinds of candy.

Discount grocer Aldi is advertising a 250-piece variety pack of Mars Inc. chocolate bars—including Milky Way, Twix and Snickers—for $24.98. Two years ago, the same package was advertised at $19.54.

Hershey Co.—which has raised its prices by 7% or more in each of the last seven quarters—acknowledged this week that higher prices are taking a toll on demand. Hershey's North American confectionary sales volumes fell 1% in the July-September period.

"We know that value and affordability continue to be top-of-the-line for consumers as budgets are stretched," Hershey's President and CEO Michele Buck said Thursday on a conference call with investors.

Buck said Hershey is trying to meet consumers' needs with offerings in value stores and pack sizes at various price points.

## EVEN IN FACE OF INFLATION, HIGH INTEREST RATES

# US consumers keep spending briskly

**WASHINGTON** (AP)—An inflation gauge that is closely monitored by the Federal Reserve showed price increases remained elevated in September amid brisk consumer spending and strong economic growth.

Friday's report from the Commerce Department showed that prices rose 0.4% from August to September, the same as the previous month. And compared with 12 months earlier, inflation was unchanged at 3.4%.

Taken as a whole, the figures the government issued Friday show a still-surprisingly resilient consumer, willing to spend briskly enough to power the economy even in the face of persistent inflation and high interest rates. Spread across the economy, the strength of that spending is itself helping to fuel inflation.

In a cautionary note, consumers relied increasingly on savings to fuel their shopping last month. Income growth slowed. Adjusted for inflation, income actually fell slightly.

Yet spending jumped 0.4%, after adjusting for inflation. The saving rate fell to 3.4%, down from the 6%-plus average before the pandemic.

"That is clearly unsustainable, and we expect spending growth will slow sharply in the quarters ahead," said Michael Pearce, lead U.S. economist at Oxford Economics, a consulting firm.

September's month-to-month price increase exceeds a pace consistent with the Fed's 2% annual inflation target, and it compounds already higher costs for such necessities as rent, food and gas. The Fed is widely expected to keep its key short-term interest rate unchanged when it meets next week. But its policymakers have flagged the risk that stronger growth could keep inflation persistently high and require further rate hikes to quell it.

Since March 2022, the central bank has raised its key rate from near zero to roughly 5.4% in a concerted drive to tame inflation. Annual inflation, as measured by the separate and more widely followed consumer price index, has tumbled from the 9.1% peak it reached in June of last year.

On Thursday, the government reported that strong consumer spending drove the economy to a robust 4.9% annual growth rate in the July-September quarter, the best such showing in nearly two years. Heavy spending by consumers typically leads businesses to charge higher prices. In Friday's report on inflation, the government also said that consumer spending last month jumped a robust 0.7%.

Spending on services jumped, Friday's report said, led by greater outlays for international travel, housing and utilities.

Excluding volatile food and energy costs, "core" prices rose 0.3% from August to September, above the 0.1% uptick the previous month. Compared with a year earlier, though, core inflation eased to 3.7%, the slowest rise since May 2021 and down from 3.8% in August.

A key reason why the Fed may keep rates unchanged through year's end is that September's 3.7% year-over-year rise in core inflation matches the central bank's forecast for this quarter.

# Nation

# Maine mass killing suspect had mental health issues

**LEWISTON, Maine** (AP)—Police missed two clear opportunities to end a dragnet that locked down and terrified Maine's second-largest city after a gunman killed 18 people at a bowling alley and a bar following a recent spiral into paranoia.

The body of Robert Card was found Friday in a trailer at a recycling center in Lisbon Falls that police had searched a day earlier. Card died of an apparent self-inflicted gunshot wound, but it was unclear when, authorities said.

The 40-year-old was suspected of also injuring 13 people during the shooting rampage on Wednesday night in Lewiston.

Lisbon Police Chief Ryan McGee said law enforcement scoured the Maine Recycling Corp. property, where Card once worked, and cleared it on Thursday, but did not check another part of the company's land nearby. Officers came back early Friday morning and again found nothing.

**» Purchased guns legally, authorities say**

Another team returned that evening and searched the other part of the property that had not been checked, and found Card's body in the trailer along with two firearms, McGee said. A rifle had been found Wednesday night in Card's abandoned car nearby.

Authorities recovered a multitude of weapons during their search for Card and believe he had legally purchased his guns, including those recovered in his car and near his body, said Jim Ferguson, the special agent in charge of the Boston office of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

AP

These photos provided by the Maine Department of Public Safety shows victims of the Maine shooting, Top from left, Ronald G. Morin, Peyton Brewer-Ross, Joshua A. Seal, Bryan M. MacFarlane, Joseph Lawrence Walker, Arthur Fred Strout. Second row from left, Maxx A. Hathaway, Stephen M. Vozzella, Thomas Ryan Conrad, Michael R. Deslauiers II, Jason Adam, Tricia C. Asselin. Third Row from left, William A. Young, Aaron Young, Robert E. Violette and Lucille M. Violette, William Frank, Keith D. Macneir.

He declined to provide specific details about the guns, including their make and model, and wouldn't say exactly how many were found.

Investigators are still searching for a motive for the massacre, but have increasingly been focused on Card's mental health history. State Department of Public Safety Commissioner Michael Sauschuck said Card was hearing voices and had paranoia, adding that he believed "people were talking about him and there may even have been some voices at play."

Last summer Card underwent a mental health evaluation after he began acting erratically at an Army training facility in New York, officials said. A bulletin sent to police shortly after this week's attack said Card had been committed to a mental health facility for two weeks after "hearing voices and threats to shoot up" a military base.

At a news conference Saturday, Sauschuck said there was no evidence that Card had ever been involuntarily committed to a mental health facility, which could've made it illegal for him to posses guns. A simple evaluation or voluntary commitment would not have triggered such a prohibition, he said.

Under Maine's yellow flag law, law enforcement can detain someone they suspect is mentally ill and poses a threat to themselves or others. The law differs from red flag laws in that it requires police first to get a medical practitioner to evaluate the person and find them to be a threat before police can petition a judge to order the seizure of the person's firearms.

"Just because there appears to be a mental health nexus to this scenario, the vast majority of people with mental health diagnosis will never hurt anybody," Sauschuck said.

Police found a note in Card's home addressed to a loved one with the passcode to his phone and bank account number, Sauschuck said. The commissioner said he wouldn't describe it as an explicit suicide note but the tone indicated that was the intent.

Family members of Card told federal investigators that he had recently discussed hearing voices and became more focused on the bowling alley and bar, according to law enforcement officials who spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity in order to discuss details of the investigation.

Street life returned to Lewiston on Saturday after a dayslong lockdown in the city of 37,000. Joggers took advantage of the warm weather. People walked dogs through downtown, picked up coffee and visited other shops that had been closed since the shooting.

"Right now, we want Maine to be remembered as the community that came together after this tragic event," McGee said, recalling how he drove into town Saturday and saw "people walking the streets, people sitting on porches, waving. Giving the thumbs-up."

For many residents it was a day to reflect, mourn and, for some, take the first tentative steps toward normalcy. Some went hunting on the opening day of firearm season for deer, and one family handed out buckets of flowers in downtown. Others gathered at a makeshift memorial to the victims down the street from the bar targeted by Card.

William Brackett, whose namesake son was among those killed, visited the memorial Saturday and said he could feel pent up tension leave his body when he learned Card was dead.

## Pence ends White House campaign after struggling to gain traction

**NEW YORK** (AP)—Former Vice President Mike Pence on Saturday dropped his bid for the Republican presidential nomination, ending his campaign for the White House after struggling to raise money and gain traction in the polls.

"It's become clear to me: This is not my time," Pence said at the Republican Jewish Coalition's annual gathering in Las Vegas. "So after much prayer and deliberation, I have decided to suspend my campaign for president effective today."

"We always knew this would be an uphill battle, but I have no regrets," Pence went on to tell the friendly audience, which reacted with audible surprise to the announcement and gave him multiple standing ovations.

Pence is the first major candidate to leave a race that has been dominated by his former boss-turned-rival, Donald Trump, and his struggles underscore just how much Trump has transformed the party. A former vice president would typically be seen as a formidable challenger in any primary, but Pence has struggled to find a base of support.

He chose the Las Vegas event to announce his decision, in part, so he could continue to voice his support for Israel and to make his case one last time as a candidate that the isolationist and populist tides that have swept the Republican Party pose a danger to its future and embolden the nation's enemies, according to two people close to Pence who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss his thinking.

Pence's decision, more than two months before the Iowa caucuses that he had staked his campaign on, saves him from accumulating additional debt, as well as the embarrassment of potentially failing to qualify for the third Republican primary debate, on Nov. 8 in Miami.

But his withdrawal is a huge blow for a politician who spent years biding his time as Trump's most loyal lieutenant, only to be scapegoated during their final days in office when Trump became convinced that Pence somehow had the power to overturn the results of the 2020 election and keep both men in office—which he did not.

While Pence averted a constitutional crisis by rejecting the scheme, he drew Trump's fury, as well as the wrath of many of Trump's supporters, who still believed his lies about the election and see Pence as a traitor.

Among Trump critics, meanwhile, Pence was seen as an enabler who defended the former president at every turn and refused to criticize even Trump's most indefensible actions.

As a result, an Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research from August found that the majority of U.S. adults, 57%, viewed Pence negatively, with only 28% having a positive view.

## Can the new speaker unite GOP where others failed?

**WASHINGTON** (AP)—New House Speaker Mike Johnson inherits many of the same problems that bedeviled Republican leaders with far more experience. At least for now, however, he holds favor with the ultra-conservative wing of his party that toppled previous House speakers. But can he unite House Republicans where others failed?

The Louisiana Republican emerged last week from the lower ranks of the House GOP leadership to ascend to speaker after lawmakers, driven by a faction of hardliners, ousted Rep. Kevin McCarthy from the job and then rejected two more top-ranked Republicans in leadership as well as conservative favorite Rep. Jim Jordan.

To his supporters, Johnson represented a turn to "decentralizing the power" from the speaker's office, with a goal of cutting government spending and engaging forcefully on socially conservative priorities.

"The greatest threat to our national security is our nation's debt," Johnson said in a speech after taking the gavel.

While not a member of the hard-charging House Freedom Caucus, Johnson is seen by Republicans as a dyed-in-the-wool conservative unlike previous speakers such as McCarthy, R-Calif., or former Rep. John Boehner, R-Ohio.

An evangelical Christian who often cites the Bible, Johnson worked as an attorney for anti-abortion and Christian groups before running for office. During his four terms in the House, he has led an ardently conservative caucus called the Republican Study Committee. He also spearheaded a legal effort, championed by then-President Donald Trump, that sought to overturn the 2020 election results in key states that the Republican incumbent lost to Democrat Joe Biden.

Johnson's role in the Trump-backed lawsuit quickly became a rallying point for Republicans, who vigorously booed a reporter's question about that election on the night that the congressman became nominee for speaker. On the House floor, many cheered when Democrats said Johnson was an architect of the objections to the 2020 results.

Trump, who is running for a second White House term, enthusiastically backed Johnson and said he will be "a fantastic speaker." Trump's allies saw Johnson's rise as a chance to give renewed rigor to their efforts to impeach Biden.

"I think Mike Johnson will approach this like a lawyer and like a tactician, not like a California lottery winner," said Rep. Matt Gaetz, taking a swipe at how McCarthy once won $5,000 from a lotto ticket. Gaetz, R-Fla., was the leader of the band of Republicans who ousted McCarthy.

But Johnson faces the same questions that vexed McCarthy: How to patch together a slim Republican majority wracked by feuding? How to keep the government funded and open for business? Does Congress provide more wartime aid for Ukraine?

McCarthy had years of experience in leadership to help deal with such challenges. In the end, though, he could not unite Republicans. He failed to corral Republicans for vital legislation and his decision to rely on Democrats to help pass a short-term measure that prevented a federal shutdown gave hard-line conservatives a justification for removing McCarthy as speaker.

# Asia

## Sudden death of China's former No. 2 leader has shocked many

**HONG KONG** (AP)—The sudden death of China's former second-ranking leader, Li Keqiang, has shocked many people in the country, with tributes offered up to the ex-official who promised market-oriented reforms but was politically sidelined.

Li, who died early Friday of a heart attack, was China's top economic official for a decade, helping navigate the world's second-largest economy through challenges such as rising political, economic and military tensions with the United States and the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Li was extolled as an excellent (Communist Party of China) member, a time-tested and loyal communist soldier and an outstanding proletarian revolutionist, statesman and leader of the Party and the state," the official Xinhua News Agency said in its brief obituary.

Li was known for his advocacy of private business but lost much of his influence as President Xi Jinping accumulated ever-greater powers and elevated the military and security services in aid of the "great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation."

A hashtag related to his death on the Chinese social media platform Weibo drew over 1 billion views in just a few hours. On posts about Li, the "like" button was turned into a daisy—a common flower for funerals in China, and many users commented "rest in peace." Others called his death a loss and said Li worked hard and contributed greatly to China.

The Chinese government, however, had little to say immediately about Li. Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning asked reporters to refer to information from official news agency Xinhua and the obituary released later.

"We deeply mourn over the tragic passing of Comrade Li Keqiang due to a sudden heart attack," she said.

Beijing resident Xia Fan, 20, said she was saddened by the death of Li, whom she called "a really conscientious and responsible premier." She said her mind was blank when she first heard about the news.

"He really accompanied the growth of our generation, that's how it feels in my heart," she said.

Designer Chen Hui said Li contributed greatly to China's development. "If I were to talk about it, it's impossible to finish it in one day. It's a pity," Chen said.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken expressed his condolences on the passing of Li, said Matthew Miller, State Department spokesperson.

Nicholas Burns, U.S. ambassador to China, also extended his condolences to Li's family, the Chinese government and the Chinese people in both English and Chinese on X, formerly known as Twitter.

Japan's embassy in China expressed its condolences on Weibo. It said Li had visited Japan in 2018 and he played an importance role in the relations of both countries.

Li, an English-speaking economist, was from a generation of politicians schooled during a time of greater openness to liberal Western ideas. Introduced to politics during the chaotic 1966-76 Cultural Revolution, he made it into prestigious Peking University, where he studied law and economics, on his own merits rather than through political connections.

## ASIAN BRIEFS

### US military says Chinese fighter jet came within 10 feet of B-52 bomber over S. China Sea

**BANGKOK** (AP)—A Chinese fighter jet came within 10 feet of an American B-52 bomber flying over the South China Sea, nearly causing an accident, the U.S. military said, underscoring the potential for a mishap as both countries vie for influence in the region. In the night intercept, the Shenyang J-11 twin-engine fighter closed on the U.S. Air Force plane at an "uncontrolled excessive speed, flying below, in front of, and within 10 feet of the B-52, putting both aircraft in danger of a collision," the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command said in a statement released late Thursday. "We are concerned this pilot was unaware of how close he came to causing a collision," the military said. China's Foreign Ministry put the blame on the U.S., suggesting the American aircraft was flying over the South China Sea as a deliberate provocation. "The U.S. military planes traveled thousands of miles to China's doorstep to flex muscle," said Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning. "That is the source of maritime and air security risks, and is not conducive to regional peace and stability."

### S. Koreans hold subdued Halloween celebrations year after party crush killed about 160 people

**SEOUL, South Korea** (AP)—Halloween celebrations in South Korea were subdued on the eve of the first anniversary of a harrowing crowd surge that killed about 160 people in a Seoul alleyway. Many restaurants, bars, department stores and amusement parks avoided Halloween-themed events this year as a sign of respect for the victims. Few people clad in Halloween costumes were seen Saturday in Seoul's popular Itaewon neighborhood, where revelers fell on each other like dominos as a large number of people crammed into the narrow, sloping alley.

Post-it notes with condolence messages such as "We won't forget you forever" or "Sorry. Please, rest in peace" plastered the walls of the site. A mourning station established in central Seoul received many visitors, who laid white flowers and burned incense in front of photos of the victims.

### Sharp increase in Afghans leaving Pakistan due to illegal migrant crackdown, say UN agencies

**KABUL, Afghanistan** (AP)—U.N. agencies have reported a sharp increase in Afghans returning home since Pakistan launched a crackdown on people living in the country illegally. They urged Pakistan to suspend the policy before it was too late to avoid a "human rights catastrophe." Pakistan earlier this month said it will arrest and deport undocumented or unregistered foreigners after Oct. 31. Two provinces bordering Afghanistan have set up deportation centers. The government says the campaign is not aimed at a particular nationality, but it mostly affects Afghans who make up the bulk of foreigners living in the country. U.N. agencies said Friday there are more than 2 million undocumented Afghans in Pakistan, at least 600,000 of whom fled after the Taliban takeover in 2021.

Afghanistan is going through a severe humanitarian crisis, particularly for women and girls, who are banned by the Taliban from education beyond sixth grade, most public spaces and many jobs. There are also restrictions on media, activists, and civil society organizations. The International Organization for Migration and the U.N. refugee agency said tens of thousands of Afghans left Pakistan between Oct.3-15, with many citing fear of arrest as the reason for their departure. "We urge the Pakistan authorities to suspend forcible returns of Afghan nationals before it is too late to avoid a human rights catastrophe," the agencies said.

# World

## Netanyahu says Gaza war entered new stage

AP

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu speaks during a press conference with Defense Minister Yoav Gallant and Cabinet Minister Benny Gantz in the Kirya military base in Tel Aviv, Israel, Saturday, Oct. 28, 2023.

**JERUSALEM** (AP)—Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told the nation Saturday night that the military has opened a "second stage" in the war against Hamas by sending ground forces into Gaza and expanding attacks from the ground, air and sea.

Casting the war as a fight for his country's very survival, he warned that the assault would only intensify ahead of a broad ground invasion into the territory.

"There are moments in which a nation faces two possibilities: to do or die," Netanyahu said. "We now face that test and I have no doubt how it will end: We will be the victors. We will do and we will be the victors."

The bombardment—described by Gaza residents as the most intense of the war—knocked out most communications in the territory late Friday and largely cut off the besieged enclave's 2.3 million people from the world. Communications were restored to many people in Gaza early Sunday, according to the telecoms company, Internet-access advocacy group NetBlocks.org and confirmation on the ground.

Highlighting the ongoing attacks, the Israeli military released grainy images showing tank columns moving slowly in open areas of Gaza, many apparently near the border, and said warplanes bombed dozens of Hamas tunnels and underground bunkers. The underground sites are a key target in Israel's campaign to crush the territory's ruling group after its bloody incursion into Israel three weeks ago.

The escalation ratcheted up domestic pressure on Israel's government to secure the release of dozens of hostages seized in the Oct. 7 rampage by Hamas, when militants stormed from Gaza into nearby Israeli towns and gunned down civilians and soldiers. The unprecedented attack during a major Jewish holiday initiated a war between Israel and Hamas that could spread into a broader Mideast conflict.

Desperate family members met with Netanyahu on Saturday and expressed support for an exchange for Palestinian prisoners held in Israel, a swap floated by the top Hamas leader in Gaza.

### WITH NOTABLE ABSENSE OF RUSSIA

## Talks on Ukraine's peace plan open in Malta with officials from 65 countries

**VALLETTA, Malta** (AP)—Talks on Ukraine's plan for peace kicked off in Malta on Saturday, with the participation of more than 65 countries—but not Russia, Maltese and Ukrainian officials said.

The two-day meeting of national security delegates is the third round of such talks in recent months. Ukraine sees them as an opportunity to win support for President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's 10-point peace plan from countries across the globe, especially as the conflict in the Middle East risks shifting the focus away from Ukraine.

Russia, which wasn't invited to any of the meetings, has dismissed the initiative as biased.

"Ukraine's diplomatic efforts are paying off, as international support for the Ukrainian peace formula is growing," the head of the Ukrainian presidential office, Andriy Yermak, wrote on X—formerly known as Twitter—ahead of the opening session.

The initial round of talks in Copenhagen in June saw just 15 participants, rising to 43 for the second round in Jeddah in August.

In his speech at the conference, Yermak noted that, as more and more states are joining the development of Zelenskyy's plan, "Russia will have to give in to the international community. It will have to accept our common conditions."

He then specified that five of the 10 points of the plan would be discussed at the weekend talks: nuclear safety, energy security, food security, the release of prisoners of war and deportees, and the restoration of Ukraine's territorial integrity.

In his opening remarks, Malta's foreign minister, Ian Borg, said the high attendance was a "vote of confidence in Malta as a peace broker," reiterating the country's support for Ukraine.

"Although we are a neutral state, we cannot remain silent in the face of injustice, atrocities and abuse of power in this region," Borg said. "Malta believes in multilateralism under the auspices of international law and the U.N. Charter."

# Health & Wellness

## Understanding high-functioning anxiety

**DEAR MAYO CLINIC: I've always been a high achiever, both personally and professionally. But I struggle with a whirlwind of worries and thoughts, constantly second-guessing myself and pushing for perfection. I've heard the term "high-functioning anxiety," and I feel like it is what I'm experiencing. How can I navigate and cope with this?**

**ANSWER:** It's normal to feel anxious sometimes, especially in stressful situations. However, for some people, excessive and ongoing anxiety can be a challenge to control and interferes with daily activities.

There are several types of anxiety disorders. The term "high-functioning anxiety" represents people with anxiety symptoms while maintaining a high level of functionality in various aspects of their lives. Often, they are successful in their careers or other roles, yet internally struggle with persistent feelings of stress, self-doubt, and the fear of not measuring up. They feel extremely uncomfortable inside and struggle with significant self-criticism.

High-functioning anxiety isn't recognized in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders but instead is a subset of generalized anxiety. Many emotional and physical symptoms are associated with generalized anxiety disorder. The symptoms of high-functioning anxiety mirror many of these, but some may be more prominent.

Some symptoms of generalized anxiety disorder include overall general nervousness and worry. Other symptoms that may lead you towards high-functioning anxiety include internal struggles with:

- Fears of criticism or significant self-criticism.
- Fears of looking inadequate or foolish to others.
- Feeling on the edge or on the verge of losing control.
- Sense of impending doom.
- Significant stress.

It's important that you meet with a mental health professional to talk about your symptoms and obtain an accurate diagnosis. Then, if it is determined that you have high-functioning anxiety, you can develop a care plan for having the best quality of life.

Counseling and therapy play crucial roles in helping people with high-functioning anxiety manage their symptoms effectively. Cognitive behavioral therapy can help you learn to reframe your thoughts about life and transform behaviors that may feed your anxiety. Instead of being self-critical and looking for what could go wrong, you can be taught to manage your thoughts, seek solutions and guide yourself through anxious feelings.

In addition to therapy, other coping strategies to ease symptoms include:

- **Creating a support network.** People with high-functioning anxiety may believe they must deal with their behaviors alone because they fear criticism or negative outcomes. A positive support network of people who care for you, regardless of outcomes, can help ease anxiety symptoms.
- **Establishing healthy boundaries.** This can help improve relationships with others and establish rules for yourself. The importance of saying "no" is often talked about as part of boundary setting. That's because many people overextend themselves—but some people with high-functioning anxiety also should embrace saying "yes" to opportunities that stretch their comfort levels. Their lives grow in experiences and fulfillment the more they face their fears.
- **Forgetting comparisons.** People with anxiety tend to compare themselves to others, feel the need to improve and want to be more like someone else. Comparison can rob you of joy and contentment.
- **Identifying core values.** Some people with high-functioning anxiety become fixated on society-defined success, like having the "right" job, car, house and material possessions. Often, these items are only important because other people believe they are important. A therapist can help you uncover what is important to you outside society's expectations and align your thoughts and actions with your core values.
- **Learning to accept criticism.** This can be difficult for many people but especially people with high-functioning anxiety. You may find yourself getting defensive. A therapist can help you identify ways to step back at this moment and evaluate the feedback neutrally without emotion.
- **Practicing mindfulness**. This is the practice of purposefully being aware of and focusing on the present moment. Concentrating on one thing or moment can increase feelings of calm and peace.

Medications can help some people with high-functioning anxiety, but should only be used in conjunction with other coping strategies and under the care of a healthcare professional.

Talk with your healthcare team about how you are feeling. They can connect you to a skilled mental health counselor or therapist, if needed, and assist you with coping strategies to manage your anxiety and lead a fulfilling life.—Linda Hubbard , Psychotherapy, Mayo Clinic Health System, Eau Claire, Wisconsin ***(Mayo Clinic News Network)***

## Healthy Living

### Tastes in lettuce

*Lettuces vary widely in appearance, hardiness and flavor; here's a few popular types compared:*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Iceberg** | Leaves grow in dense head | Long-lasting in fridge but little flavor, few nutrients |
| **Leaf lettuce** | Loosely gathered green or red-tipped leaves | Full-flavored and crisp; shorter shelf life |
| **Romaine** | Closely packed leaves in long, narrow head | Good flavor and crunch; long life in fridge |
| **Butterhead** | Tender leaves forming a soft head | Good flavor, but can be expensive; shorter shelf life |

Source: Dole Europe, Cook's Thesaurus, TNS Photo Service

## CDC grants aims to find if more people can survive cardiac arrest

By HELENA OLIVIERO
The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

DREAMSTIME

Cardiac arrest is the leading cause of death among adults in the United States, and the chance of survival increases dramatically when a nearby person can immediately call 911 and begin CPR.

Each year, about 350,000 people in the U.S. suffer cardiac arrest outside a hospital setting. Most of them die before reaching the hospital. But where a person collapses and whether that person can get immediate CPR is often the difference between life and death.

Emory's Cardiac Arrest Registry to Enhance Survival, or CARES, is receiving $23.85 million in grant funding over the next five years from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The study will expand a national data collection tool to better understand how, why, and where these cardiac arrests are taking place and to then implement intervention strategies to save lives.

Cardiac arrest occurs when the heart suddenly and unexpectedly stops beating. CARES is the only national data collection tool that connects pre-hospital cardiac arrest data with hospital outcomes. CARES equips communities with crucial data to compare patient populations, interventions, and outcomes related to sudden cardiac arrest.

Survival and good outcomes for cardiac arrest patients depend on a chain of events and circumstances. Studies show that bystander-initiated CPR can double or triple the chances of survival.

CARES research has found access to these life-saving interventions can differ dramatically according to race, gender, income, and other factors.

Last year, CARES published a major study that found that Black and Hispanic persons were less likely than white persons to receive potentially lifesaving bystander CPR at home and in public locations. The study found this was the case regardless of the racial or ethnic makeup or income level of the neighborhood where the cardiac arrest occurred.

"CDC is committed to preventing deaths and disability from the nation's leading killer, cardiovascular disease," said Dr. Janet S. Wright, director of CDC's Division for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention in a press release. "By investing in CARES, CDC is making timely, practical, quality-enhancing data available to communities and health systems across the country. These insights can help identify and eliminate disparities and lead to longer, healthier lives for all."

The CDC CARES Expansion and Modernization Grant, which went into effect this month, marks a return to public funding for the CARES performance and quality improvement program. Originally founded by Emory and CDC in 2004, the registry has operated through private funding since 2013, largely through philanthropic support.

The new funding channel was made possible through recent legislation that was signed into law at the end of last year. The Cardiovascular Advances in Research and Opportunities Legacy (CAROL) Act was introduced in 2021 by Congressman Andy Barr, in honor of his late wife, Carol Leavell Barr, who died from sudden cardiac death.

CARES said the CDC funding will go toward investing in quality improvement efforts and technological updates and advancements to ensure faster and more streamlined data collection, analysis, and dissemination.

The grant will also help CARES expand its coverage to include all 50 states (currently 33 participate).

CARES currently covers 178 million people or 53% of the U.S. population.

CARES will continue to partner with the American Heart Association, and the American Red Cross, both of which will continue to play a key role in training local workforces to implement CARES locally and ensure data quality.

Cardiac arrest is the leading cause of death among adults in the United States, and the chance of survival increases dramatically when a nearby person can immediately call 911 and begin CPR. While being trained to perform CPR is ideal, anyone can perform hands-only CPR to help restart blood and oxygen circulation. 911 dispatchers can walk people through steps over the phone.

CARES says their role in data collection is a key part of identifying where these kinds of disparities exist, helping to figure out how and why they happen, and then helping local partners create a plan for how to intervene. Intervention strategies can include providing CPR training, building up access to automated external defibrillators or AEDs, reducing risk factors, conducting bias training, and helping districts determine where they need to allocate more resources toward emergency medical services in under-resourced neighborhoods.

# Life & Style

## Matthew Perry, Emmy-nominated 'Friends' star, dead at 54

**LOS ANGELES** (AP)—"Friends" star Matthew Perry, the Emmy-nominated actor whose sarcastic, but lovable Chandler Bing was among television's most famous and most quotable characters, has died at 54.

The actor was found dead of an apparent drowning at his Los Angeles home Saturday, according to the Los Angeles Times and celebrity website TMZ, which was the first to report the news. Both outlets cited unnamed sources confirming Perry's death.

"Matthew was an incredibly gifted actor and an indelible part of the Warner Bros. Television Group family," the company said in a statement. "The impact of his comedic genius was felt around the world, and his legacy will live on in the hearts of so many. This is a heartbreaking day, and we send our love to his family, his loved ones, and all of his devoted fans."

AP

Matthew Perry arrives at the premiere of "The Invention of Lying" in Los Angeles on Monday, Sept. 21, 2009.

Perry's publicists and other representatives did not immediately respond to messages from The Associated Press seeking comment.

Asked to confirm police response to what was listed as Perry's home address, LAPD Officer Drake Madison told the AP that officers had gone to that block "for a death investigation of a male in his 50s."

Perry's 10 seasons on "Friends" made him one of Hollywood's most recognizable actors, starring opposite Jennifer Aniston, Courteney Cox, Matt LeBlanc, Lisa Kudrow, and David Schwimmer as a friend group in New York.

As Chandler, he played the quick-witted, insecure and neurotic roommate of LeBlanc's Joey and a close friend of Schwimmer's Ross. During the show's hijinks, he could be counted on to chime in with a line like "Could this BE any more awkward?" or another well-timed quip.

Perry was open about his long and public struggle with addiction, writing at the beginning of his 2022 million-selling memoir: "Hi, my name is Matthew, although you may know me by another name. My friends call me Matty. And I should be dead."

"Friends" ran from 1994 until 2004, winning one best comedy series Emmy Award in 2002. The cast notably banded together for later seasons to obtain a salary of $1 million per episode for each.

By the "Friends" finale, Chandler is married to Cox's Monica and they have a family, reflecting the journey of the core cast from single New Yorkers trying to figure their lives out to several of them married and starting families.

The series was one of television's biggest hits and has taken on a new life—and found surprising popularity with younger fans—in recent years on streaming services.

Perry described reading the "Friends" script for the first time in his memoir, "Friends, Lovers and the Big Terrible Thing."

"It was as if someone had followed me around for a year, stealing my jokes, copying my mannerisms, photocopying my world-weary yet witty view of life. One character in particular stood out to me: it wasn't that I thought I could 'play' Chandler. I 'was' Chandler."

Unknown at the time was the struggle Perry had with addiction and an intense desire to please audiences.

"'Friends' was huge. I couldn't jeopardize that. I loved the script. I loved my co-actors. I loved the scripts. I loved everything about the show but I was struggling with my addictions which only added to my sense of shame," he wrote in his memoir. "I had a secret and no one could know."

"I felt like I was gonna die if the live audience didn't laugh, and that's not healthy for sure. But I could sometimes say a line and the audience wouldn't laugh and I would sweat and sometimes go into convulsions," Perry wrote. "If I didn't get the laugh I was supposed to get I would freak out. I felt that every single night. This pressure left me in a bad place. I also knew of the six people making that show, only one of them was sick."

He recalled in his memoir that Aniston confronted him about being inebriated while filming.

"I know you're drinking," he remembered her telling him once. "We can smell it," she said, in what Perry called a "kind of weird but loving way, and the plural 'we' hit me like a sledgehammer."

In the foreword to Perry's memoir, Lisa Kudrow described him as "whip smart, charming, sweet, sensitive, very reasonable, and rational." She added, "That guy, with everything he was battling, was still there."

An HBO Max reunion special in 2021 was hosted by James Corden and fed into huge interest in seeing the cast together again, although the program consisted of the actors discussing the show and was not a continuation of their characters' storylines.

Perry received one Emmy nomination for his "Friends" role and two more for appearances as an associate White House counsel on "The West Wing."

Perry also had several notable film roles, starring opposite Salma Hayek in the rom-com "Fools Rush In" and Bruce Willis in the the crime comedy "The Whole Nine Yards."

He worked consistently after "Friends," though never in a role that brought him as much attention or acclaim.

## Salman Rushdie could confront his stabber

**MAYVILLE, N.Y.** (AP)—Author Salman Rushdie could take the stand against the man charged with repeatedly stabbing him before a lecture when the defendant goes on trial early next year, a prosecutor said Friday.

"He is on the people's witness list right now heading into trial," Chautauqua County District Attorney Jason Schmidt said, following a court hearing in which the judge scheduled the trial for Jan. 8.

Hadi Matar, 25, has pleaded not guilty to charges of assault and attempted murder. Authorities said the New Jersey resident left the audience and rushed the stage where the "The Satanic Verses" author was about to speak in August 2022, stabbing him more than a dozen times before onlookers intervened.

Rushdie, 76, who was left blinded in his right eye and with a damaged left hand, wrote about the attack in a memoir: "Knife: Meditations After an Attempted Murder," due out April 16.

Matar has been in custody since immediately after the attack at the Chautauqua Institution, an arts and intellectual retreat in the rural southwest corner of New York state.

"I think the biggest hurdle for all of us is going to be picking a fair and impartial jury," Schmidt said. He estimated the trial itself would last two weeks or less.

Rushdie was the target of a decades-old fatwa by the late Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini calling for his death over alleged blasphemy in "The Satanic Verses."

## Wedding plans hit snag over tipsy relatives

**DEAR ABBY:** My nephew is getting married soon, and he and his father are having issues with the guest list. My brother-in-law has a few immediate family members who don't know their limit when it comes to alcohol, and my nephew is worried that if they're invited, they'll abuse the open bar and embarrass the family.

My nephew doesn't want to invite these family members to his wedding. My brother-in-law says he will speak to them beforehand to warn them about their alcohol intake, but he insists he won't attend the wedding if these family members aren't invited. Neither one is budging, and what is supposed to be a happy occasion is becoming a battleground. Please offer some words of advice that will work for all.

ANTI-ALCOHOL AUNTIE

**DEAR AUNTIE: I'll try. A wedding celebrates more than the joining of two people in matrimony, it is also the joining together of TWO FAMILIES. Sooner or later, your nephew's wife and in-laws are going to be exposed to these relatives. Because Dad feels so strongly about them being included, and is willing to talk to them about this beforehand, HE should be put in charge of evicting anyone who acts out because they had too much to drink. This solution isn't perfect, but it may defuse the situation.**

■■■

**DEAR ABBY:** Why is it, as a man who is capable of going to the symphony as well as watching "The Bachelor," spending a day shooting rifles or sipping wine, having silly conversations or those where I listen (compared to providing feedback), and is an animal lover (but allergic to some), I cannot attract the women I want? What do you think?

CONFUSED IN TENNESSEE

**DEAR CONFUSED: So you're someone with broad interests who cannot find a broad who finds you interesting. If you start looking for candidates who enjoy the symphony and/or watching "The Bachelor," shooting rifles and sipping wine, enjoy conversation and have a particular affinity for an animal to which you are NOT allergic, you may find someone who thinks you are interesting and attractive.**

**Although you listed the various interests YOU have, not once did you mention any qualities you would like a prospective mate to have. You might find it helpful to concentrate on that for a while. Emotional compatibility should be at the top of the list.**

■■■

**DEAR ABBY:** We lost our daughter to gun violence, horribly, publicly and violently. We were the subject of news, speculation and gossip. It was several years ago, but people still ask for "details" and ask intrusive questions. It drives me up the wall and hurts my heart. I still struggle with how to respond to these people. What should I say?

DON'T WANT TO TALK ABOUT IT

**DEAR DON'T: Please accept my sympathy for your tragic loss. Consider responding this way: "I'm sure you mean well, but I do not want to discuss this with you, now or ever. Please don't ask again."**

■■■

*To receive a collection of Abby's most memorable – and most frequently requested – poems and essays, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)*

## DEAR ABBY

**By Abigail Van Buren**

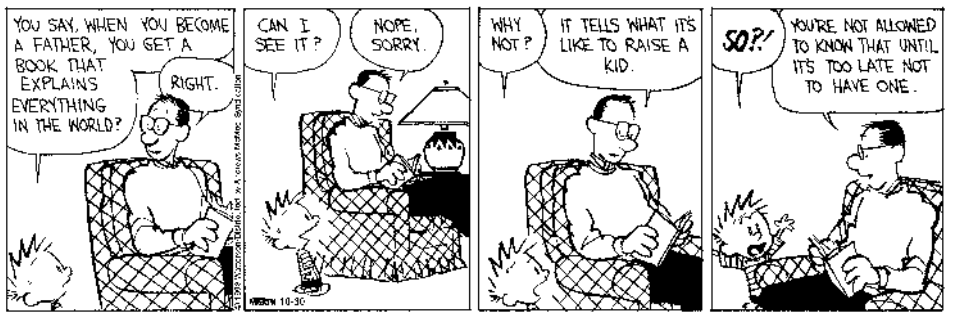
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

*Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.*

# Pastimes

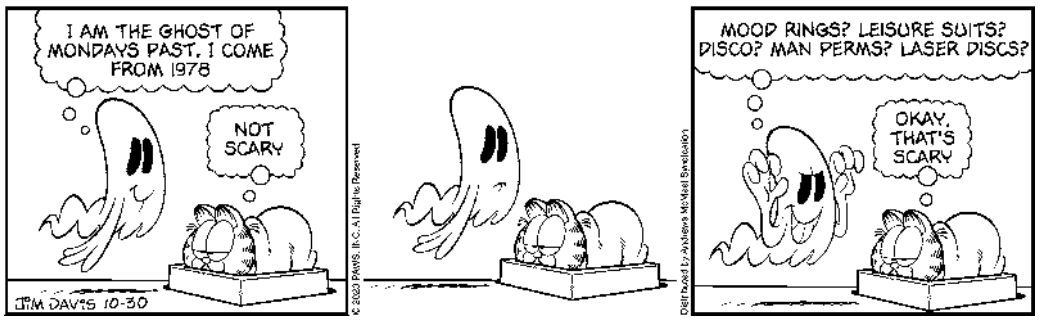
## Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


YOU SAY, WHEN YOU BECOME A FATHER, YOU GET A BOOK THAT EXPLAINS EVERYTHING IN THE WORLD?
RIGHT.
CAN I SEE IT?
NOPE, SORRY.
WHY NOT?
IT TELLS WHAT IT'S LIKE TO RAISE A KID.
SO?!
YOU'RE NOT ALLOWED TO KNOW THAT UNTIL IT'S TOO LATE NOT TO HAVE ONE.

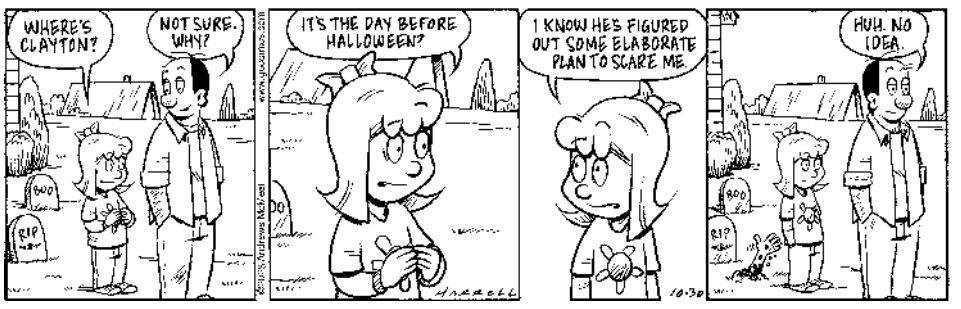
## Garfield®

By Jim Davis


I AM THE GHOST OF MONDAYS PAST. I COME FROM 1978
NOT SCARY
JIM DAVIS 10-30
MOOD RINGS? LEISURE SUITS? DISCO? MAN PERMS? LASER DISCS?
OKAY, THAT'S SCARY

## Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


WHERE'S CLAYTON?
NOT SURE. WHY?
IT'S THE DAY BEFORE HALLOWEEN?
I KNOW HE'S FIGURED OUT SOME ELABORATE PLAN TO SCARE ME.
HUH. NO IDEA.

## The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

## CROSSWORD

*By Eugene Sheffer*

**ACROSS**

1 Molt
5 Hog haven
8 Diving duck
12 Sped
13 Metal source
14 Embedded spy
15 Grand tale
16 Recent recruits
18 Japanese emperor
20 Choose
21 Periodicals, for short
23 Prefix with natal
24 Dracula-inspired trick-or-treaters
28 "Frozen" reindeer
31 "Patience — virtue"
32 Heroic narratives
34 Rock's Brian
35 Tabloid writing
37 Rugged car parts for off-roading
39 "Exodus" hero
41 Thames town
42 Bribe
45 Title holders
49 Breathes
51 Infamous tsar
52 New York canal
53 Small battery
54 Jules Verne captain
55 Fly high
56 Sample
57 Seize

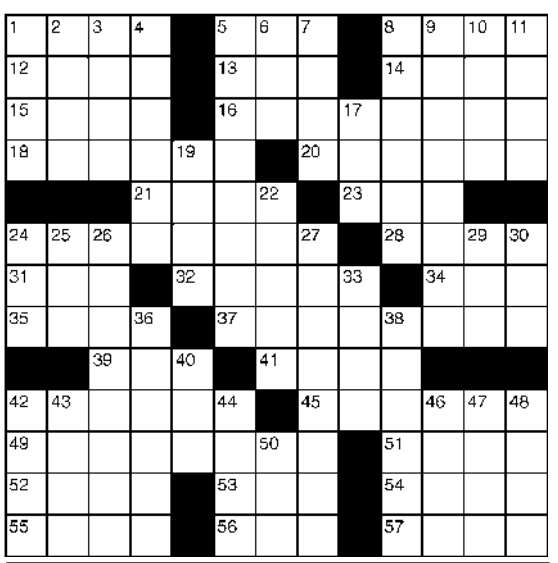
**DOWN**

1 Flower part
2 Pueblo people
3 Actor Estrada
4 Sneak away
5 Baby picture?
6 Three, in Rome
7 Evergreen trees
8 Happy faces
9 Besides
10 Power co. supply
11 Left on a map
17 Chick's mom
19 Lectern locale
22 Musical transition
24 Big shot
25 Tempe sch.
26 Kuala Lumpur's land
27 "Alas ..."
29 Away from WSW
30 Refusals
33 Pack cargo
36 Prim partner
38 Baseball division
40 "Don't mind — do!"
42 Corp. honcho
43 Plane-related
44 Dorm alternative
46 Always
47 Hindu hero
48 Elitist
50 Jug handle

Solution time: 21 mins.

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| M | A | T | | T | A | R | P | | A | X | I | S |
| A | L | E | | E | M | I | H | | D | I | D | O |
| R | O | I | I | T | I | D | F | | O | V | A | I |
| C | R | I | I | G | S | | S | U | B | | | |
| | | | A | N | S | | I | M | E | A | S | Y |
| F | O | A | M | S | | N | D | A | | S | H | E |
| I | U | N | A | | C | J | F | | S | T | F | W |
| A | Z | O | | G | O | B | | C | O | O | P | S |
| B | O | N | B | O | N | | S | U | N | | | |
| | | | O | O | F | | A | R | A | R | A | T |
| H | Y | P | O | | I | N | S | T | R | I | D | E |
| G | E | E | K | | D | A | H | L | | T | O | E |
| T | A | D | S | | R | B | A | Y | | A | S | S |

Last Friday's Answer



**STUMPED?** For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

**CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY:** Matthew Morrison, 45; Gavin Rossdale, 58; Harry Hamlin, 72; Henry Winkler, 78.

**Happy Birthday:** Opportunity is within reach. Your energetic approach to life and the offers you encounter will encourage new beginnings, exciting partnerships, and a secure and stable environment. Engage in activities that make you think and fill your heart with passion, and you'll meet someone who wants to participate in your plans. It's time to switch gears and move full speed ahead. A physical change will boost your confidence. Your numbers are 5, 13, 18, 23, 30, 42, 47.

**ARIES** *(March 21-April 19):* Follow the money. Look over contracts, renegotiate your position or apply for something new. Taking charge of your life and what's next will be exhilarating and prompt you to show more discipline in handling money and professional matters. Embrace a challenge with open arms. ✪✪✪✪

**TAURUS** *(April 20-May 20):* Simplify your schedule to ensure you get everything on your to-do list done. An unexpected opportunity will come your way through a chance meeting or change of plans. Put your energy where it counts, and you will impress onlookers and gain support. ✪✪✪

**GEMINI** *(May 21-June 20):* A poor connection will limit your achievement. Consider your weakest link and adjust what's necessary to ensure your success. Don't trust anyone skirting issues or pressuring you. Set boundaries and rely on yourself. Don't make unrealistic promises, and keep your feelings to yourself. ✪✪✪

**CANCER** *(June 21-July 22):* Don't hesitate or question your next move. Follow your instincts and contact people who can help you reach your goal. By being engaging but mysterious, you'll attract creative people with something interesting to contribute. Personal gain is favored. ✪✪✪

**LEO** *(July 23-Aug. 22):* You'll face opposition if you are too candid regarding your plans. Gather information, call on experts and listen to those who have walked the path you plan to follow. Knowledge will make a difference when it comes to your success. Trust facts, not hearsay. ✪✪✪✪

**VIRGO** *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Look at all aspects before making a move or judging someone. A change is to your benefit and best made swiftly. Be direct and let those affected by your decisions know what you plan. The input you receive will be advantageous. ✪✪✪✪✪

**LIBRA** *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Keep your eyes open for anything wrong. Pay attention to detail, do your part and massage situations that may pose a threat. Take notes and handle financial, medical or contractual issues yourself. Don't give anyone a chance to take control. ✪✪✪

**SCORPIO** *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Take care of unfinished business and move on to something you enjoy doing. Join forces with someone heading down a similar path. Use your imagination and talk to experts, and you'll find a way to use your skills to reach your goals. ✪✪✪

**SAGITTARIUS** *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* A change may not be your first choice, but it'll be beneficial once complete. What limits you now will become a passageway to a new beginning that offers longevity, hope and happiness for a better future. Incorporate your personal touch as you move forward. ✪✪✪

## EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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**CAPRICORN** *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Challenge yourself mentally and physically and satiate your passion for life. Social events, initiating domestic changes and revising how you designate money to suffice your needs will result in the happiness you desire. Leave nothing to chance, and romance someone you love. ✪✪✪

**AQUARIUS** *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Relax and enjoy the comfort of your home. Don't get wrapped up in someone else's problems. Concentrate on the pastimes that bring you joy and the people who put a smile on your face. Protect against negativity and selfish individuals. ✪✪✪✪✪

**PISCES** *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Don't guestimate what others will do; ask questions and adjust your schedule to avoid setbacks. Adjust how you handle money and health issues to ensure you put your needs first. Offer what you can to those leaning on you for support. ✪✪

**Birthday Baby:** You are aggressive, persuasive and opportunity-driven. You are imaginative and systematic.

*✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.*

## SUDOKU

**Conceptis Sudoku** *By Dave Green*

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | | | | 1 | 9 | 3 | 4 | 8 |
| | 3 | | | | | | | 1 |
| | | 7 | 4 | | 6 | | | 9 |
| | 7 | 4 | | | 2 | | | |
| | | | | | | 6 | 2 | 7 |
| 3 | 2 | 6 | | | 1 | 4 | 8 | 5 |
| 6 | | | 1 | | | | 7 | 2 |
| | 5 | 1 | 6 | | 7 | 8 | | |
| 7 | | | 8 | | | 9 | 1 | 6 |

Difficulty: ★ 10/30

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Last Friday's Answer

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 8 | 6 | 9 | 5 | 7 |
| 3 | 7 | 8 | 4 | 5 | 9 | 2 | 6 | 1 |
| 6 | 9 | 5 | 7 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 8 | 3 |
| 9 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 6 | 8 | 7 | 3 | 2 |
| 8 | 6 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 7 | 5 | 9 | 4 |
| 7 | 2 | 3 | 9 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 1 | 8 |
| 5 | 1 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 6 |
| 2 | 8 | 9 | 6 | 7 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 5 |
| 4 | 3 | 6 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 8 | 7 | 9 |

Difficulty: ★★★★ 11/28

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## WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

TIME TO AD-LIB Solution: 5 letters

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| D | I | A | L | O | G | U | E | C | N | E | I | D | U | A |
| G | R | L | A | R | U | T | A | N | O | T | E | S | U | C |
| N | S | A | R | T | I | S | T | I | C | B | T | D | O | T |
| I | W | C | M | U | S | I | C | K | A | A | I | N | Y | I |
| S | N | O | R | A | N | T | A | T | G | O | C | A | T | N |
| U | O | V | H | I | T | E | E | E | O | E | L | N | E | G |
| O | I | L | U | S | P | N | S | N | R | P | E | I | L | W |
| E | S | M | M | S | K | (T) | E | T | E | P | I | E | E | E |
| N | S | H | O | N | (O) | L | N | M | O | C | E | C | V | I |
| A | U | T | R | (N) | C | S | A | E | U | R | S | I | I | V |
| T | C | Y | (E) | H | T | X | E | T | M | R | Y | O | S | R |
| N | S | H | O | F | R | E | E | D | O | M | T | V | I | E |
| O | I | R | E | H | E | A | R | S | A | L | O | S | O | T |
| P | D | E | L | I | V | E | R | E | V | E | L | C | N | N |
| S | P | E | E | C | H | E | S | I | V | O | R | P | M | I |

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**Last Friday's Answer: Argentina**

To purchase **WONDERWORD** books, visit www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480. (In Canada, call 1-855-232-2367)

# Kelly dominates after Korea detour as D-backs rout Rangers

**ARLINGTON, Texas** (AP)—Merrill Kelly called his four-season detour to South Korea a "Lost in Translation" experience. When he made his World Series debut, it was Texas Rangers batters who were disoriented.

The 35-year-old right-hander pitched three-hit ball over seven innings, Ketel Marte extended his postseason hitting streak to a record 18 games and the Arizona Diamondbacks routed Texas 9-1 on Saturday night to even the World Series at one game apiece.

"At this point in my career, nothing is going to shock me," Kelly said. "I think going over to Korea as a 26-year-old is way scarier than pitching in the big leagues or even in the World Series."

Kelly struck out nine, walked none and allowed his only run on Mitch Garver's leadoff homer in the fifth on a sinker at the bottom of the strike zone. His 22 called strikes were the most for a Series pitcher since Stephen Strasburg in Game 6 for the 2019 Washington Nationals.

"I thought he might go nine innings today at one point," Diamondbacks manager Torey Lovullo said, contemplating what would have been the first complete game in the World Series since 2015. "But for that to happen, 89 pitches, you've got to jump him up probably another 35. I wasn't going to let him throw 120 pitches."

Gabriel Moreno hit a go-ahead homer in a two-run fourth against Jordan Montgomery, and Tommy Pham went 4 for 4 with a pair of doubles. Arizona batters broke it open late as the young Diamondbacks rebounded quickly from an agonizing defeat the night before.

Marte had a two-run single in a three-run eighth, snapping a tie for the longest postseason hitting streak with Derek Jeter, Manny Ramírez and Hank Bauer. Marte has a hit in every postseason game he's ever played.

A night after wasting a two-run, ninth-inning lead in a 6-5, 11-inning loss, the Diamondbacks outhit Texas 16-4—the most hits for one team in a Series game in nine years.

Emmanuel Rivera also had a two-run single, and rookie Corbin Carroll had a pair of RBI singles. Lourdes Gurriel Jr. and 38-year-old Evan Longoria each singled in a run for Arizona, which got its first World Series road win after four losses dating to 2001.

The best-of-seven Series, just the third between wild-card teams, shifts to Arizona for Game 3 on Monday in the first Series game at Phoenix since 2001.

AP

Arizona Diamondbacks starting pitcher Merrill Kelly throws against the Texas Rangers during the first inning in Game 2 of the baseball World Series Saturday, Oct. 28, 2023, in Arlington, Texas.

Texas has won all eight of its road games this postseason, equaling a major league record.

"We'd be naive to think that we're going to run away with four in a row against a team that really fights hard like the same way we did," Rangers first baseman Nathanial Lowe said.

Kelly was drafted by Tampa Bay in 2010 and had spent six seasons in the minors when he was told by pitcher Doug Mathis he had been spotted by a South Korean scout while pitching in Rochester, New York. Kelly's agents at Apex Baseball arranged a contract and Kelly spent 2015-18 with SK Wyverns in Incheon.

"I definitely had visions and images about me sitting on this podium," Kelly said in the post-game interview room, recounting how he got up each morning, made coffee and checked MLB games. "It felt literally and figuratively miles away."

In an on-field interview with MLB Network, he called it "Lost in Translation" type stuff, referring to the 2003 Sofia Coppola movie of cultural displacement, saying "as far as how they view pitching, for four years I pretty much had to figure it out myself."

"The coaches that I had, the translation factor, obviously, is a bit of a hindrance," he said later in the interview room. "At the end of the day, I think what helped over there the most is almost being my own voice and my own pitching coach."

Kelly made his big league debut with Arizona in 2019 and is 48-43. He went 12-8 with a 3.29 ERA in 30 starts this season and is 3-1 with a 2.25 ERA in four postseason starts.

He went to only one three-ball count Saturday.

"Just great command. He hit his spots all night, four pitches. He was on," Rangers manager Bruce Bochy said.

Kelly's grandmother June was at the game and he looked forward to seeing her for the first time since a 2011 visit when he was driving to spring training with his wife.

Kelly's brother Reed also was in the stands. Last year, Merrill took Reed to Game 3 of the World Series in Philadelphia.

"His birthday is Halloween," Merrill Kelly said. "He texted me the other day saying that obviously this is probably the best birthday present I could give him."

Pham, a trade-deadline acquisition from the New York Mets, entered in a 3-for-29 skid that included a Game 1 homer. He singled in the second, hit opposite-field doubles to right in the fourth and sixth, and singled in the eighth. He also was picked off second base by Montgomery.

Pham was inspired by Kurt Reece's self-help book "Good Is The Enemy Of Great."

"One of my mentors, who the St. Louis Cardinals hired, he gave it to a group of us to read that were hand-chosen from the Cardinals to work with him," Pham said. "Highly recommend it."

Montgomery, coming off his second big league relief appearance, a win in Game 7 of the ALCS at Houston on Monday, had a velocity dip of about 1.5 mph from his season average. Diamondbacks batters failed to make contact on just two of the 37 pitches they swung at.

"Sometimes you've just got to grit," he said.

At 2 hours, 59 minutes, it was the quickest World Series game since 2017.

Rangers rookie third baseman Josh Jung dove into foul territory to snag Christian Walker's fourth-inning grounder, then popped to his feet to throw out Walker at first. Walker leaped to make a barehand grab of Jonah Heim's fifth-inning grounder that hit first base and flipped to Kelly covering for the out.

## Montgomery has gritty start for Rangers, but no Ks in his first postseason loss

**ARLINGTON, Texas** (AP)—As gritty as Jordan Montgomery was in his first World Series start for the Texas Rangers, including an unexpected third time through the middle of an Arizona lineup that had already hurt him, the left-hander just wasn't at his best.

"Just kind of tried to piece together as many outs as I could for the guys," Montgomery said after his first postseason loss. "Obviously I didn't have my best stuff. But you're not going to be perfect out there every time. And just sometimes you've just got to grit."

Five days after pitching 2 1/3 innings in relief to win the deciding Game 7 in the AL Championship Series, Montgomery's sinker velocity was down from his season average, as was the spin on his curveball. He got only two swing-and-misses while pitching into the seventh inning and didn't record a single strikeout.

Montgomery allowed four runs and nine hits as the Rangers fell 9-1 to the Diamondbacks. That evened the series at a game apiece going into Game 3 at Arizona on Monday night.

"He was pitching well. Here he was in the seventh, the pitch count was good, had a one-run ballgame," manager Bruce Bochy said when asked if Montgomery's second career relief outing threw him out of his normal routine. "That's always a hard one to answer. But he felt good. ... I don't know how much it affected him, but he's not saying it did."

Montgomery, who threw 50 of his 75 pitches for strikes and walked only one batter, said he was on his regular rest and had a good bullpen session after the ALCS clincher.

"Pretty much one or two mistakes that hurt us, but other than that, I thought he pitched really well," All-Star catcher Jonah Heim said.

Nathan Eovaldi and Montgomery provided the wild-card Rangers quite a 1-2 punch at the top of their rotation by going undefeated through the first three rounds of the playoffs. Neither one of them could repeat that when lined up to open the World Series, though Texas rallied for an 11-inning win in the opener after Big Game Nate, their All-Star pitcher, couldn't make it out of the fifth.

A trade-deadline acquisition from the St. Louis Cardinals, the 30-year-old who is eligible for free agency after the season had been 3-0 with a 2.16 ERA in his first five playoff games.

Montgomery became the first pitcher to complete six innings in a World Series game without a strikeout since Atlanta's Greg Maddux in Game 2 against the New York Yankees in 1996. The last starter without any Ks was Yu Darvish for the Los Angeles Dodgers in Game 7 against Houston in 2017—though he didn't get out of the second inning. Darvish was also pulled in the second and didn't strike out anyone in Game 3 of that series.

The Rangers' bullpen was stirring in the fifth inning, just like in Game 1. But Montgomery got out of it on consecutive popouts by Ketel Martel and Corbin Carroll, the top two batters in Arizona's lineup.

It certainly looked like that could be the end of the night for Montgomery, considering what was coming up next.

Arizona had gone ahead 2-0 in a four-batter stretch in the fourth, when Gabriel Moreno homered, Tommy Pham hit a out-out double and Lourdes Gurriel drove in Pham with a single. The only out in that span was on All-Star rookie third baseman Josh Jung's incredible defensive play, when he made a backhanded diving stop, got up in foul territory and threw out Christian Walker at first.

But Montgomery came back out in the sixth and Moreno swung at the first pitch, dribbling a ball about 3 feet in front of the plate—about 410 feet shorter than his homer—where Heim pounced on the ball. Walker popped up the third pitch before Pham doubled for the third of his four hits and Gurriel was intentionally walked. Montgomery then picked off Pham, who got too far off second base, to end the inning.

"Executed some good changeups and got some quick outs," Montgomery said. "Pham put another good good swing on a sinker, put it down the line, and caught him a little overaggressive at second."

With the bottom of the order due, the lefty went back out for the seventh, but gave up consecutive hits to the Nos. 7-8 batters, the first a left-hander. That ended Montgomery's night, and both eventually scored to put Arizona up 4-1.

"He was pitching well. He's done such a great job," Bochy said. "You look at the man, he's got the ability to pitch if it's down a tick a little bit. And he showed that tonight."

# LaVine's 51 points not enough for Bulls in loss to Pistons

**DETROIT** (AP)—Jalen Duren had 23 points and 15 rebounds as the Detroit Pistons overcame a career-high 51 points from Zach LaVine to beat the Chicago Bulls 118-102 on Saturday night.

"I'm feeling really comfortable in my second season, but that's not because of me," said Duren, who doesn't turn 20 until Nov. 18. "My teammates and coaches have helped me make the game a lot easier."

LaVine's effort was the first 50-point game of the NBA season and made him the first Bulls player with 50 points and no assists since Michael Jordan did it against the Miami Heat on Nov. 6, 1996.

"It's our third year here together, and we know how this business is," LaVine said. "We all love each other. DeMar (DeRozan) is one of my best friends, and we talk all the time, but we have to figure out how to make this work."

LaVine had been a game-time decision with back spasms.

"You know me," he said. "I'm going to play."

Cade Cunningham added 25 points and 10 assists for the Pistons, who ended a 15-game losing streak to the Bulls, while Alec Burks added 18 off the bench.

"I think Cade and I are just kind of a match," Duren said. "He's got a high IQ and I've got a high IQ and we know the type of players we are. When he's got the ball in his hands, good things are going to happen. So I'm trying to get the ball to him."

Rookie Ausar Thompson had nine points, 12 rebounds and five assists in Detroit's home opener. He also helped hold LaVine to two points in the final eight minutes.

"It's hard to explain all the ways he makes winning plays on the floor," Pistons coach Monty Williams said. "He had a track-down steal on LaVine that most players can't do, and he's blocking jump shots by guys that most defenders can't even close out. He's doing that and he's just getting started."

DeRozan scored 20 for the Bulls, but Nikola Vucevic with 12 was the only other Bull to reach double figures.

LaVine, who shot 19 of 32, scored 20 points in the third quarter, giving him 39 in the game, but Jaden Ivey's 3-pointer at the buzzer gave the Pistons an 84-77 lead.

Cunningham started the fourth with a three-point play and Burks followed with a 3-pointer to make it a 13-point game. LaVine scored 10 points to help the Bulls get within 95-89 with 8:33 to play.

LaVine, though, didn't get enough offensive help and the Bulls couldn't put together enough stops. Two free throws by Cunningham made it 109-97 with 2:30 to play, and the Pistons held on for the victory.

The Pistons shot 60.5% from the floor while building a 57-45 lead. LaVine had 19 points in the first quarter, but didn't score in the second. Detroit had a 25-12 edge in bench points, with Burks and Marvin Bagley III getting nine each.

Duren's double-double was the 22nd of his career, breaking a tie with LeBron James for the third most by a teenager in NBA/ABA history. Moses Malone had 50 and Dwight Howard finished with 46.

AP

Detroit Pistons center Jalen Duren makes a layup as Chicago Bulls guard Zach LaVine defends during the first half of an NBA basketball game, Saturday, Oct. 28, 2023, in Detroit.

## 76ERS 114 RAPTORS 107

**TORONTO** (AP)—Joel Embiid and Tyrese Maxey each scored 34 points, and Philadelphia beat Toronto to give new coach Nick Nurse his first win against his former team.

Kelly Oubre Jr. scored 18 points and Tobias Harris had 15 as the 76ers won their fourth straight over the Raptors.

Toronto fired Nurse in April after five seasons as head coach. Nurse led Toronto to the NBA championship in 2019 and was voted NBA Coach of the Year in 2020. Fans rose for a brief standing ovation when Nurse was honoured with a video tribute during a first-quarter timeout.

Scottie Barnes scored 24 points, Gary Trent Jr. had 17 and rookie Gradey Dick scored 16 points for the Raptors.

## PELICANS 96 KNICKS 87

**NEW ORLEANS** (AP)—Brandon Ingram scored 26 points, Zion Williamson added 24 and New Orleans remained unbeaten on this young NBA season with a victory over New York.

Ingram hit an array of mid-range pull-ups, turnaround and fades, while Williamson was a force going to the hoop to give him at least 22 points in each of New Orleans' first two games.

RJ Barrett scored 18 for the Knicks, who appeared to run out of steam in the fourth quarter after winning in Atlanta one night earlier.

## TIMBERWOLVES 106 HEAT 90

**MINNEAPOLIS** (AP)—Naz Reid scored 25 points on 10-for-14 shooting in 28 minutes off the bench, sparking Minnesota over short-handed Miami in its home opener.

The fan favorite Reid swished back-to-back 3-pointers during an 11-0 run for the Timberwolves midway through the fourth quarter and went 4 for 7 from deep. Rudy Gobert (14 points, 14 rebounds) and Karl-Anthony Towns (12 points, 10 rebounds) also played their parts in a dominant performance by the Minnesota big men as the Heat faded hard down the stretch.

Anthony Edwards finished with 19 points after a late flurry for the Timberwolves (1-1), who outscored the Heat 24-4 over a seven-plus minute stretch that lasted deep into the fourth quarter.

Tyler Herro scored 22 points on 8-for-23 shooting and Bam Adebayo added 19 points for Miami, which played without starting forwards Jimmy Butler (rest) and Kevin Love (bruised left shoulder) on the second half of a back-to-back set of games.

## PACERS 125 CAVALIERS 113

**CLEVELAND** (AP)—Aaron Nesmith scored a career-high 26 points and Tyrese Haliburton had 21 points, 13 assists and eight rebounds, sending Indiana over short-handed Cleveland.

Cleveland played without three starters, including All-NBA shooting guard Donovan Mitchell (right hamstring soreness). Point guard Darius Garland (left hamstring strain) and centre Jarrett Allen (left ankle bone bruise) also remained out.

Myles Turner had 20 points and 12 rebounds for Indiana, which outscored the Cavaliers 29-12 in the second quarter and won its second straight game to open the season. Bennedict Mathurin and Jalen Smith added 13 points apiece.

Evan Mobley had 33 points, 14 rebounds and three blocks for Cleveland. Caris LeVert started at the point and had 31 points and eight assists, while Max Strus finished with 21 points, 11 rebounds and six assists.

## WIZARDS 113 GRIZZLIES 106

**WASHINGTON** (AP)—Corey Kispert scored all of his 22 points in the first half, and Washington held off winless Memphis in its home opener.

Memphis, which is without suspended star Ja Morant, has dropped its first three games this season after surpassing 50 wins in each of the past two. The Grizzlies were on the second night of a back-to-back after a four-point loss to defending champion Denver.

Jordan Poole led the Wizards with 27 points and Kyle Kuzma added 21. They attempted 23 field goals apiece, with Kuzma going 1 of 10 from 3-point range.

Desmond Bane scored 26 points for Memphis.

## SUNS 126 JAZZ 104

**PHOENIX** (AP)—Kevin Durant scored 26 points, Eric Gordon added 21 and Phoenix easily handled Utah.

Phoenix was playing without two-thirds of its star trio. Devin Booker (ankle) missed his second straight game while Bradley Beal (back) has missed all three games this season.

Grayson Allen added 17 points, while Jusuf Nurkic had 10 points, seven rebounds and six assists. Phoenix poured in 40 points in the third quarter to put away the game. Durant was a methodical 8 of 11 from the field and hit all nine of his free throws. The 13-time All-Star added seven assists.

The Jazz had 19 turnovers in a sloppy performance. Lauri Markkanen had 19 points, making five 3-pointers. Collin Sexton scored 14 points over the bench while rookie Keyonte George, the 16th overall pick out of Baylor, added 12 points, seven rebounds and six assists.

## NBA BRIEFS

### NBA looking into facts behind Harden's absence from 76ers' opener in Milwaukee

**MILWAUKEE** (AP)—The Philadelphia 76ers went to Milwaukee without James Harden and the NBA wants to know why. The league, which strengthened its rules about resting healthy players this summer, is investigating the reasons behind Harden's absence from the 76ers' nationally televised season opener against the Bucks on Thursday night. "We're looking into the facts around James Harden's availability tonight to determine whether an approved reason exists for his lack of participation," NBA spokesman Mike Bass said in a statement. Harden wants to be traded and was away from the Sixers recently until returning this week. Coach Nick Nurse said Wednesday that the point guard wouldn't travel with the team so he could work on rebuilding his conditioning with team staff members at the 76ers' training facility. TNT reported during the 76ers' 118-117 loss that Harden had attempted to board the team plane to Milwaukee and was turned away. Asked after the game whether that report was accurate, Nurse replied that "there was a report that he showed up for practice and we determined that he should stay back for conditioning." The player participation policy requires teams to demonstrate an approved reason for a star player to miss national TV games (such as Phoenix listing injuries for Devin Booker and Bradley Beal that had them missing the Suns' visit to the Los Angeles Lakers on Thursday night). Teams could be fined $100,000 for their first violation of the policy.

### Former NBA star Dwight Howard denies sexual assault lawsuit filed by Georgia man

**ATLANTA** (AP)—Dwight Howard has denied accusations by a Georgia man who says he was sexually assaulted by the former NBA star and another person. Stephen Harper filed a state civil lawsuit against Howard in July, alleging assault and battery, false imprisonment and intentional infliction of emotional distress. No criminal charges have been filed against Howard. In a response filed this week by his attorney, Howard described the 2021 encounter at his home in the Atlanta suburbs as consensual and requested that the case be dismissed. Harper's lawsuit says he met Howard through Instagram, and they exchanged explicit text messages before arranging to meet at Howard's home on July 19, 2021. While on his way to the Gwinnett County residence, Harper says Howard texted him to ask if another man or woman could join their planned sexual encounter. Harper says he told Howard he was not interested. Once at Howard's home, Harper claims they were joined by a man dressed as a woman who identified only as "Kitty." Harper says he tried to resist the two men, but Howard and Kitty forced him to participate in sexual activity. "Mr. Harper was trapped in Defendant's bedroom and believed that he would suffer imminent bodily harm if he resisted Defendant's sexual advances," the lawsuit said. Afterward, "Mr. Harper felt extremely violated and humiliated, and was in complete shock." Howard denied the allegations in his response, which says the three men agreed to "engage in consensual sexual activity." He asked for a summary judgment, with court costs and attorney fees to be assessed against Harper.

# Allen gets Bills off to fast start in win over Buccaneers

AP

Buffalo Bills quarterback Josh Allen (17) celebrates his touchdown pass to wide receiver Gabe Davis (13) in the second half of an NFL football game against the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, Thursday, Oct. 26, 2023, in Orchard Park, N.Y.

**ORCHARD PARK, N.Y.** (AP)—Low energy wasn't going to be an issue for the slow-starting Buffalo Bills on Thursday night.

After riling up the crowd in the end zone following warmups, receiver Stefon Diggs gave what coach Sean McDermott called an impassioned pregame speech. Josh Allen then responded by throwing two touchdown passes and running for another—while shrugging off aggravating an injury to his throwing shoulder—and the Bills hung on to beat the Tampa Bay Buccaneers 24-18.

"Well, I mean, I could feel the team. They came out with an attitude and it started in the locker room, really." McDermott said, of Buffalo's early intensity level. "Stefon Diggs, there's a little motivational couple of words he said to the team before we went out there. That's what a leader does. He did a phenomenal job of basically setting the tone."

Diggs finished with nine catches for 70 yards, but wasn't always the primary target. Gabriel Davis had a career-best nine catches for 87 yards and a touchdown, and rookie tight end Dalton Kincaid scored his first career TD on a 22-yard catch in a game the Bills never trailed.

And following a week of questions about his "low-positive" approach, Allen came through for the Bills (5-3), throwing for 324 yards on 31-of-40 passing. He had been listed on the Bills' report with a right shoulder injury and was checked in the blue medical tent in the second quarter, but remained in the game.

Allen was in his comfort zone from the beginning in overseeing a hurry-up offense to find a rhythm that had been lacking in Buffalo's previous three outings. He also was unafraid to take off and run with the ball in finishing with 41 yards rushing—his most since a season-best 46 in beating Washington in Week 3.

"Personally, I feel like I did, but I will let you guys write about that whether you guys thought I did or not," Allen said, on bringing a higher energy level. "This team moves really well when I'm able to get the ball around to our playmakers."

The tempo, urgency and throws over the middle the Bills offense was criticized for previously lacking all became apparent on an opening drive. Buffalo settled for Tyler Bass kicking a 37-yard field goal after its drive stalled at Tampa Bay's 19.

## HMS

*From page 20*

ed in the championship tournament and faced two-time defending champion Napu Riders.

The Napu Riders had to claw their way out of the loser's bracket and only had a 15-minute break before facing off against the Hilitais in the championship. FMS defeated Dandan Middle School in the bronze medal round, 30-18.

HMS head coach Eric Palacios said they're dedicating their win to Delos Santos.

"The beginning of the year, a lot of the team's cheers were dedicated to him. So, this one is for him, his family, and our players and their family."

On how he felt winning the championship, "I feel ecstatic, tired, and I told the boys you might not like me because we're going to run hard all the time and practice every day. The boys practiced almost every day except for Friday and I put it all on them. I also want to thank my family because I come home late and concentrate on the boys. It's the work you put in—it will show—and it did with this championship. Thank God also for giving us this championship."

The strategy in the finals, he said, was to just play their game. He knows that they have bigger, taller, and older players so they needed to take advantage of that.

"Try to kill time if we take the lead and also at the same time, try to drive it in. If we were losing, we needed to drive in and stop the clock—which FMS was doing also," he said.

As for the season, Palacios said "in the regular season, we weren't undefeated. I think we were ranked No. 3. We lost a tough one to FMS in the regular season and a lot of the boys felt really bad. But I had to regroup them and tell them I love them. I said, 'it's not how we fall. It shows character on how we come back from way down there.' And I told them I felt that this is their year. Whoever makes the least mistakes will take the championship."

Three of their starting five are leaving for high school at the end of the school year—Lizama, Evan Cabrera, and Ioane Camacho—and Palacios said they have two players to hopefully carry over next year.

He then said, "I want to thank their parents for allowing the kids to practice almost every day. I want to thank the basketball federation, James [Lee], Marlene [Lumabi], our school's admin, and you guys [Saipan Tribune and Marianas Variety]."

Lizama, who is Delos Santos' cousin, also said he dedicated their win to him. When asked how he felt during the OT when he had to make sure he made the free throws every time he was fouled, he said that it felt good making them even though the pressure was high. He said FMS was a good team and tough to play against and said, "it feels good to get my first championship and it was very fun playing throughout the season."

**HMS 24** – Lizama 13, Cabrera 5, Galarse 4, Camacho 2.

**FMS 22** – Duenas 6, Pangilinan 6, D. Camacho 5, Saralu 2, Dilao 2, Rogolifoi 1.

**Scoring by halves:** 7-15, 13-13, 24-22 (OT).

## EASY

*From page 20*

The Easy Riders, however, showed The Game who's boss and why they're undefeated as they put it all out on the court in the second half. The Game still gained traction and managed to retain a small lead, but the Easy Riders made sure to come back.

The fourth quarter was all Easy Riders as The Game could not get any of their shots to stick. This gave Easy Riders the upper hand and began to pull away with back-to-back interceptions by speedy Ren Ren Gaviola and Cris Diwa that led to baskets and converted fast-break drives.

In the end, Easy Riders got the better of The Game and went away still unscathed in the league with a 13-point deficit win.

Craig Padayao led the Easy Riders with 12 points, while Frank Ferrer and Diwa made 11 markers each. The Game's Ervin Villarin tried to take them all the way back with 15 points, as Mizutani and Basa came up with 10 each.

Checkpoint also managed to stop CK Saints, 68-57, in the second game of the night.

The Saints had a close first half lead, but Checkpoint bounced back with a barrage of 3-pointers in the fourth quarter to ensure a big lead and hold on to it.

Checkpoint's mainstay Coby Santos held down the Saints with 19 points, while Jack Aranda had 15. The Saints' Eli Aughenbaugh and Leo Galarse scored 12 each.

Results of master's division semis JSN vs. Legends will be posted in the next issues of *Saipan Tribune.* Continuation of Blue Haus and A Plus Team's semis game will be held tonight as it was rained out last Thursday night.

The Easy Riders and Checkpoint need to win one more game to make it to the finals after they first go up against each other tomorrow night. Eats Easy and CK Saints will duke it out first. The finals are set for Nov. 4, Saturday.

### First Game

**Easy Riders 64** — Padayao 12, Ferrer 11, Diwa 11, De Guzman 9, Gaviola 9, Camacho 8, Ashburn 4.

**The Game-Eats Easy 51** — Villarin 15, Mizutani 10, Basa 10, Ferrari 4, Galang 4, Gutierrez 4, Ong 2, Deleon Guerrero 2.

**Scoring by periods:** 12-11, 23-28, 47-32, 64-51.

### Second Game

**Checkpoint 68** — C. Santos 19, Aranda 15, Castro 9, Quan 7, Kim 6, Camacho 4, K. Santos 4, Sablan 4.

**CK Saints 57** — Aughenbaugh 12, Galarse 12, Brennan 8, Ybanes 4, Mendiola 4, Manibusan 4, LJ Reyes 4, Luizi Reyes 4, Blas 3, Ogumoro 2.

**Scoring by quarters:** 10-9, 25-26, 46-37, 68-57.

## FATHER

*From page 20*

exciting—a little extra motivation to pick it up between zombies, so yeah it was a lot of fun."

He added the event was great and had missed the first one last year because he was off-island, but his wife and kids loved it and decided to come back for the second annual. On why he and his family didn't wear costumes, he said it was because they were double-booked on a busy sports-filled Saturday. "My kids were at a soccer game right before, so I couldn't make it all work today," he said.

For Lovel's part, she said the course "was really fun. There were a few parts that I didn't really like because I was barefoot where I stepped on a few pinecones."

When asked which race she liked better—last year's or this year's, she said, "I like them equally because last year I liked how they were trying to chase the flags and this year I liked how they were making it spookier."

Simon Necesito, Run Saipan race coordinator, thanked the Marianas High School National Honor Society for volunteering as the course "zombies." He then acknowledged Run Saipan president Edward Dela Cruz Jr., who is off-island, on how tough it is to coordinate a race from the bottom up. "I have a newfound respect for Ed on what he does for Run Saipan. It's a lot," said Necesito.

Necesito then said the turnout of the race wasn't much because there were a lot of Halloween events happening at the same time. There was also the Japanese Autumn Festival the same night.

LEIGH GASES

Top 3 of the women's division in the Run Saipan 2nd Annual Zombie 5K race, from right, third place Savannah Grant, first place Lovel Spaeth, and second place Isla Grant,pose for a photo with race director Simon Necesito, left, at the Garapan Fishing Base last Saturday night.

LEIGH GASES

From right, second place in the men's division and costume contest Beau Bauer, first place in the men's division Travis Spaeth, race director Simon Necesito, and costume contest third place Kraig Church, pose for a photo after the Run Saipan 2nd Annual Zombie 5K race at the Garapan Fishing Base last Saturday night. Costume contest first place Dr. Ron Snyder left before the photo.

LEIGH GASES

Run Saipan volunteers from the Marianas High School Run Club and MHS National Honor Society, who serves as "zombies," pose for a photo before they scare runners of the Run Saipan 2nd Annual Zombie 5K race at the Garapan Fishing Base last Saturday night.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

From right, women's division costume contest first place Savannah Grant, race director Simon Necesito, second place Liz Church, and third place Catalina Frink pose for a photo after the Run Saipan 2nd Annual Zombie 5K race at the Garapan Fishing Base last Saturday night.

Kelly dominates after Korea detour as D-backs rout Rangers.

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Saipan Tribune
Sports

Allen gets Bills off to fast start in win over Buccaneers.

PAGE 19

# HMS completes upset in OT for hoops title

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

Hopwood Middle School Hilitais finally crowned themselves champion after they fought to the death in overtime against archrival Francisco M. Sablan Middle School Napu Riders, 24-22, in the IT&E Interscholastic Boys Middle School Basketball League 2023-2024 championships at the Marianas High School Gymnasium last Saturday.

LEIGH GASES

Hopwood Middle School's boys varsity basketball team poses for a photo after they won the championship against Francisco M. Sablan Middle School in the IT&E Interscholastic Boys Middle School Basketball League 2023-2024 at the Marianas High School Gymnasium last Saturday.

The Hilitais, led by 8th grader Jequinn Lizama, outburned the Napu Riders' fire as they had just one thing in mind: win the championship after falling short the last couple of seasons and dedicate it to their classmate and teammate, Bradley Delos Santos, who was swept out to sea last April.

The pressure was on in OT as Lizama—with FMS trying to save time to try and take the lead—was fouled multiple times. He kept his composure and didn't let nerves—or the fate of his school—hang heavy on his shoulders as he made every single free throw to put them up, 24-19, with just a few seconds left.

FMS' Jairus Pangilinan resuscitated his team one last time with a big 3-pointer to make it 22-24, but time ran out as an attempt to tie it up with a layup and force another OT was foiled—which handed the Hilitais the championship.

When it came down to it in the last half, HMS and FMS were tied, 10-10, with a little over two minutes left. It was a low-scoring game because both defenses were tight and put so much pressure on the other's offense.

Regulation ended 13-13 but prior to that HMS' 2-point lead seemed safe before free throws by FMS' Pangilinan and Dezmond Camacho forced the extension.

The Hilitais gave themselves the upper hand when they battled their way to the winner's bracket and came out undefeat-

See HMS on Page 19

LEIGH GASES

Hopwood Middle School boys basketball team huddles with their coach Eric Palacios, back middle, covered, and assistant coach Jonathan Sugatan, left, facing camera, after their championship win versus Francisco M. Sablan Middle School in the IT&E Interscholastic Boys Middle School Basketball League 2023-2024 at the Marianas High School Gymnasium last Saturday.

LEIGH GASES

Hopwood Middle School's Jequinn Lizama, left, goes for a layup as Francisco M. Sablan Middle School's Dezmond Camacho, during the first half of their championship game in the IT&E Interscholastic Boys Middle School Basketball League 2023-2024 at the Marianas High School Gymnasium last Saturday.

## Easy Riders, Checkpoint draw first blood in open semis

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

Easy Riders and Checkpoint battled their way past roadblocks to draw first blood in the semis of the open division in the Inaugural SMEC-SMLEG Invitational Basketball Tournament 2023 last Saturday at the Gualo Rai Basketball Court.

The Easy Riders had it hard against The Game-Eats Easy, but came through in the last quarter to win, 64-51.

The first half showed that it would be another close game and both teams did not disappoint as they brought the heat early on. The Game led at the end of the second quarter, 28-23, from Francisco Mizutani's slick fast-break plays and with help from 3-point man Preston Basa.

See EASY on Page 19

LEIGH GASES

Easy Rider's Cris Diwa goes for a layup as he's defended by The Game-Eats Easy's D.J. Ong, left, and Preston Basa during the semis game in the open division of the Inaugural SMEC-SMLEG Invitational Basketball Tournament 2023 last Saturday at the Gualo Rai Basketball Court.

## Father-daughter duo survives Zombie 5K

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

The father-and-daughter duo of Travis and Lovel Speath—sans costumes—traversed the "zombie"-infested Beach Road Pathway and came out on top of their respective divisions in the 2nd Annual Run Saipan Zombie 5K at the Garapan Fishing Base last Saturday night.

Travis was first place in the men's division with a time of 26:23—just a second ahead of Beau Bauer at 26:24. "Neptune"—or Dr. Ron Snyder with his heavy garb of netting, spray paint, and a wig—came in third place with a time of 28:54.

Lovel was first place in the women's division with a time of 26:50; second place was Isla Grant at 26:51; and third was Savannah Grant with a time of 27:23.

There was also a costume contest after the race with Snyder unsurprisingly grabbing first place in the men's division and won a 48-oz. Yeti bottle, Bauer (Forrest Gump) was second place for a Hydroflask, and Kraig Church came in third for a Yeti plastic water bottle. All prizes were provided by All Star Sporting Goods and The Athlete's Foot.

In the women's costume contest, Liz Church (Luigi of Mario Bros) won first place, Savannah Grant won second, and third place was Catalina Frink.

Travis said after the race that the race was "a lot of fun. The zombies jumping up behind the trees and bridges made it extra

See FATHER on Page 19

LEIGH GASES

Participants of the Run Saipan 2nd Annual Zombie 5K race, including best Halloween costume winner Dr. Ron Snyder as Neptune, center, pose for a photo before the start of the race at the Garapan Fishing Base last Saturday night.